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THE WORKS OF EDMUND BURKE

THE WORKS

OF

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDMUND BURKE

VOL. VI

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

F. W. RAFFETY

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EDMUND BURKE

Born, Dublin 1728
Died, Beaconsfield . . . . July 8, 1797

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STACK ANNEX

PREFACE

With this sixth volume is concluded what is believed to be the fullest selection of the writings and speeches of Burke ever published in an easily accessible form. A complete edition of Burke, it has been remarked, has yet to be issued, as it is probable that much of his correspondence has never been collected, and many of his pieces may still remain either unprinted or unknown to be his.

Until such an edition is available it is impossible to claim that any selection contains the best of Burke. But from the many volumes of his published works, with the exception of the Warren Hastings proceedings, there will be found here all that could reasonably be desired in a popular edition. To know them will be to have no fragmentary acquaintance with Burke, and 'the rapid and alert reading' of the text of these pieces will be the best introduction for the ordinary reader. For the student there are many editions of Burke's various works, particularly the *Select Works*, by the late Mr. E. J. Payne. Admiration for the scholarship and regret for the loss of that Editor have both been increased by the occasional use the present writer has made of his authoritative work.

He who devotes his life and the utmost efforts of his intellect to the disclosure and establishment of general principles, wrote S. T. Coleridge, deserves the esteem of his patriotic countrymen. Coleridge referred to the fact that Burke's speeches and writings on the American War agree in principle and deduction with those on the French Revolution, though the practical inferences are opposite. How are we to explain the notorious fact that the speeches and writings of Edmund Burke are more interesting at the present day (continued Coleridge,

disprove what his enemies were saying as to his madness —at least where France was not concerned. The pamphlet he intended to enlarge and remodel under the title of 'Letters on Rural Economics addressed to Mr. Arthur Young'. This book was advertised but not produced.

Some piquancy is added to this tract by its defence of ardent spirits (p. 28), to which Dugald Stewart vigorously replied. It is chiefly interesting to us as showing Burke's intense concern for his rural surroundings, for those 'miscalled the poor', and for the insight it gives us into his own farming and marketing. There is a pleasant contrast between the heated debates of Westminster and the quarrels with Fox, and the home farm and Uxbridge market, where 'I forgot to ask about pease' (p. 25).

Burke lays down the broad rule that the state ought to confine itself to what regards the state. 'Let us be saved from too much wisdom of our own, and we shall do tolerably well' (p. 30). So remarkably modern is Burke almost wherever we find him, that at times we can hardly quote him without being under a suspicion of present-day inference. 'My opinion is against an over-doing of any sort of administration, and more especially against this most momentous of all meddling on the part of authority; the meddling with the subsistence of the people' (p. 32).

Burke's practical contribution to the distress from the scarcity then prevailing was to set up a mill and retail bread to the poor under cost price.

A Letter to a Noble Lord, 1795, has been referred to before. It was, says Prior, 'perhaps the most brilliant exhibition of sarcastic powers in the whole range of English prose.' The turning of the tables upon the Duke of Bedford, however, is not its chief claim on our attention to-day. As Burke's *Apologia*, it reveals the story of his rise and progress in the political world of that time; his generous comradeship, but also his half-concealed disappointment that circumstances had kept him down to a certain level of

success, and only yielded that to ceaseless struggle. '*Nitor in adversum*' was the motto for a man like him, he says (p. 51). Again, after the loss of his son, he feels that he lives in an inverted order (p. 64). 'I am alone. I have none to meet my enemies in the gate. Indeed, my lord, I greatly deceive myself, if in this hard season I would give a peck of refuse wheat for all that is called fame and honour in the world.'

Henceforth he was more than ever given up to the claims of France and the refugees; a school for whom he had founded at Penn. He succoured many at his own house, and stirred up the government to make compassionate grants.

Letters on the Proposals for Peace with the Regicide Directory of France 1796.

The two last letters were published after Burke's death, although legal process had been necessary to restrain their piracy by a bookseller.

The fourth letter, a reply to Lord Auckland's pamphlet, was really the first. The whole is not a finished work; the first letter being the most complete, the second a hasty addition, and the third and fourth fragmentary. It may be that there is shown 'a deeper and more sustained sense of the importance of the question at issue' than in the *Reflections* (Payne), and some may even find in this work Burke's masterpiece, but in the opinion of most readers it adds nothing to his reputation as a statesman. The fine passages only make us wonder how they come there, thinks Mr. Morley. Though the American sentiments are recalled, the piece is full of 'indictments against a whole people'; for he refused to discriminate. Burke not only failed to recognize any good in the Revolution, he gloried in the fact. 'I confess I was always blind enough to regard the French Revolution in the act, and much more in the example, as one of the greatest calamities that had ever fallen upon mankind' (p. 340). He declines to distinguish between those who are trying to reconstruct a state and levellers and assassins.

While with his general object and mode of advocacy little sympathy may be felt, the letters will repay a careful reading. They are full of the fine passages always to be found in Burke, both on the particular subject-matter and on thoughts by the way.

'The heart of the citizen is a perennial spring of energy to the state' (p. 90).

'If we command our wealth, we shall be rich and free; if our wealth commands us, we are poor indeed' (p. 93).

The same 'general principles' as in the American writings are evident from this:

'They who stir up the people to improper desires, whether of peace or war, will be condemned by themselves. They who weakly yield to them will be condemned by history' (p. 133).

'War never leaves where it found a nation. It is never to be entered into without mature deliberation' (p. 144).

'The blood of man should never be shed but to redeem the blood of man. It is well shed for our family, for our friends, for our God, for our country, for mankind. The rest is vanity; the rest is crime' (p. 145).

And this in a fierce pamphlet denouncing peace!

Another re-echo is even more distinct:—

'In truth, the tribe of vulgar politicians are the lowest of our species. There is no trade so vile and mechanical as government in their hands... They think there is nothing worth pursuit, but that which they can handle, which they can measure with a foot-rule, which they can tell upon ten fingers' (p. 180).

Burke had a good deal to say to those who opposed the war on economic grounds; to those 'who croak themselves hoarse about the decay of our trade'. He quotes a mass of statistics to disprove these 'birds of evil presage'—'those perverted minds which have no delight but in contemplating the supposed distress, and predicting the immediate ruin, of their country' (p. 299).

Hazlitt, who uttered so many contrary opinions, treated Burke much in his usual way. But he will be

borne out by every thoughtful reader when he says: 'If there are greater prose writers than Burke, they either lie out of my course of study or are beyond my sphere of comprehension.' To Sir Leslie Stephen, one of Hazlitt's commentators, Burke appeared the greatest—almost the only great political writer in the language.

May these six little volumes be the means of bringing Burke within 'the course of study' of a still larger number of the present generation.

F. W. RAFFETY.

THOUGHTS AND DETAILS

ON

SCARCITY

ORIGINALLY PRESENTED

TO THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM PITT

IN THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER,

1795

THOUGHTS AND DETAILS

ON

SCARCITY

Of all things, an indiscreet tampering with the trade of provisions is the most dangerous, and it is always worst in the time when men are most disposed to it: that is, in the time of scarcity. Because there is nothing on which the passions of men are so violent, and their judgement so weak, and on which there exists such a multitude of ill-founded, popular prejudices.

The great use of government is as a restraint; and there is no restraint which it ought to put upon others, and upon itself too, rather than that which is imposed on the fury of speculating under circumstances of irritation. The number of idle tales, spread about by the industry of faction, and by the zeal of foolish good-intention, and greedily devoured by the malignant credulity of mankind, tends infinitely to aggravate prejudices, which, in themselves, are more than sufficiently strong. In that state of affairs, and of the public with relation to them, the first thing that government owes to us, the people, is *information*; the next is timely coercion:—the one to guide our judgement; the other to regulate our tempers.

To provide for us in our necessities is not in the power of government. It would be a vain presumption in statesmen to think they can do it. The people maintain them, and not they the people. It is in the power of government to prevent much evil; it can do

very little positive good in this, or perhaps in anything else. It is not only so of the state and statesman, but of all the classes and descriptions of the rich—they are the pensioners of the poor, and are maintained by their superfluity. They are under an absolute, hereditary, and indefeasible dependence on those who labour, and are miscalled the poor.

The labouring people are only poor, because they are numerous. Numbers in their nature imply poverty. In a fair distribution among a vast multitude none can have much. That class of dependent pensioners called the rich is so extremely small, that if all their throats were cut, and a distribution made of all they consume in a year, it would not give a bit of bread and cheese for one night's supper to those who labour, and who in reality feed both the pensioners and themselves.

But the throats of the rich ought not to be cut, nor their magazines plundered; because, in their persons, they are trustees for those who labour, and their hoards are the banking-houses of these latter. Whether they mean it or not, they do, in effect, execute their trust—some with more, some with less fidelity and judgement. But, on the whole, the duty is performed, and everything returns, deducting some very trifling commission and discount, to the place from whence it arose. When the poor rise to destroy the rich, they act as wisely for their own purposes, as when they burn mills, and throw corn into the river, to make bread cheap.

When I say, that we of the people ought to be informed, inclusively I say, we ought not to be flattered; flattery is the reverse of instruction. The *poor* in that case would be rendered as improvident as the rich, which would not be at all good for them.

Nothing can be so base and so wicked as the political canting language, 'the labouring *poor*.' Let compassion be shown in action, the more the better, according to every man's ability; but let there be no lamentation of their condition. It is no relief to their miserable circumstances; it is only an insult to their miserable understandings. It arises from a total want of charity,

or a total want of thought. Want of one kind was never relieved by want of any other kind. Patience, labour, sobricty, frugality, and religion, should be recommended to them ; all the rest is downright *fraud*. It is horrible to call them 'the *once happy* labourer.'

Whether what may be called the moral or philosophical happiness of the laborious classcs is increased or not, I cannot say. Thc seat of that species of happiness is in the mind ; and there are few data to to ascertain the comparative state of the mind at any two periods. Philosophical happiness is to want little. Civil or vulgar happiness is to want much, and to enjoy much.

If the happiness of the animal man (which certainly goes somewhere towards the happiness of the rational man) be the object of our estimate, then I assert, without the least hesitation, that the condition of those who labour (in all descriptions of labour, and in all gradations of labour, from the highest to the lowest inclusively) is, on the whole, extremely meliorated, if more and better food is any standard of melioration. They work more, it is certain ; but they have the advantage of their augmented labour ; yet whether that increase of labour be on the whole a *good* or an *evil*, is a consideration that would lead us a great way, and is not for my present purpose. But as to the fact of the melioration of their diet, I shall enter into the detail of proof whenever I am called upon : in the mean time, the known difficulty of contenting them with anything but bread made of the finest flour, and meat of the first quality, is proof sufficient.

I further assert that even under all the hardships of the last year, the labouring people did, either out of their direct gains, or from charity (which it seems is now an insult to them), in fact, fare better than thcy did in seasons of common plcnty, fifty or sixty years ago ; or even at the pcriod of my English observation, which is about forty-four years. I even assert that full as many in that class, as ever were known to do it before, continued to save money ; and this I can

prove, so far as my own information and experience extend.

It is not true that the rate of wages has not increased with the nominal price of provisions. I allow it has not fluctuated with that price, nor ought it; and the squires of Norfolk had dined, when they gave it as their opinion, that it might or ought to rise and fall with the market of provisions. The rate of wages in truth has no *direct* relation to that price. Labour is a commodity like every other, and rises or falls according to the demand. This is in the nature of things: however, the nature of things has provided for their necessities. Wages have been twice raised in my time; and they bear a full proportion, or even a greater than formerly, to the medium of provision during the last bad cycle of twenty years. They bear a full proportion to the result of their labour. If we were wildly to attempt to force them beyond it, the stone which we had forced up the hill would only fall back upon them in a diminished demand, or, what indeed is the far lesser evil, an aggravated price of all the provisions which are the result of their manual toil.

There is an implied contract, much stronger than any instrument or article of agreement between the labourer in any occupation and his employer—that the labour, so far as that labour is concerned, shall be sufficient to pay to the employer a profit on his capital, and a compensation for his risk; in a word, that the labour shall produce an advantage equal to the payment. Whatever is above that is a direct *tax*; and if the amount of that tax be left to the will and pleasure of another, it is an *arbitrary tax*.

If I understand it rightly, the tax proposed on the farming interest of this kingdom is to be levied at what is called the discretion of justices of peace.

The questions arising on this scheme of arbitrary taxation are these—whether it is better to leave all dealing, in which there is no force or fraud, collusion or combination, entirely to the persons mutually concerned in the matter contracted for; or to put the

contract into the hands of those who can have none, or a very remote interest in it, and little or no knowledge of the subject.

It might be imagined that there would be very little difficulty in solving this question; for what man, of any degree of reflection, can think, that a want of interest in any subject closely connected with a want of skill in it qualifies a person to intermeddle in any the least affair; much less in affairs that vitally concern the agriculture of the kingdom, the first of all its concerns, and the foundation of all its prosperity in every other matter, by which that prosperity is produced.

The vulgar error on this subject arises from a total confusion in the very idea of things widely different in themselves;—those of convention, and those of judicature. When a contract is making, it is a matter of discretion and of interest between the parties. In that intercourse, and in what is to arise from it, the parties are the masters. If they are out completely so, they are not free, and therefore their contracts are void.

But this freedom has no farther extent, when the contract is made; then their discretionary powers expire, and a new order of things takes its origin. Then, and not till then, and on a difference between the parties, the office of the judge commences. He cannot dictate the contract. It is his business to see that it be *enforced*; provided that it is not contrary to pre-existing laws, or obtained by force or fraud. If he is in any way a maker or regulator of the contract, in so much he is disqualified from being a judge. But this sort of confused distribution of administrative and judicial characters (of which we have already as much as is sufficient, and a little more), is not the only perplexity of notions and passions which trouble us in the present hour.

What is doing supposes, or pretends, that the farmer and the labourer have opposite interests;—that the farmer oppresses the labourer; and that a gentleman, called a justice of peace, is the protector of the latter,

and a control and restraint on the former; and this is a point I wish to examine in a manner a good deal different from that in which gentlemen proceed, who confide more in their abilities than is fit, and suppose them capable of more than any natural abilities, fed with no other than the provender furnished by their own private speculations, can accomplish. Legislative acts attempting to regulate this part of economy do, at least, as much as any other, require the exactest detail of circumstances, guided by the surest general principles that are necessary to direct experiment and inquiry, in order again from those details to elicit principles, firm and luminous general principles, to direct a practical legislative proceeding.

First, then, I deny that it is in this case, as in any other of necessary implication, that contracting parties should originally have had different interests. By accident it may be so undoubtedly at the outset; but then the contract is of the nature of a compromise; and compromise is founded on circumstances that suppose it the interests of the parties to be reconciled in some medium. The principle of compromise adopted, of consequence the interests cease to be different.

But in the case of the farmer and the labourer, their interests are always the same, and it is absolutely impossible that their free contracts can be onerous to either party. It is the interest of the farmer, that his work should be done with effect and celerity: and that cannot be, unless the labourer is well fed, and otherwise found with such necessaries of animal life, according to his habitudes, as may keep the body in full force, and the mind gay and cheerful. For of all the instruments of his trade, the labour of man (what the ancient writers have called the *instrumentum vocale*) is that on which he is most to rely for the repayment of his capital. The other two, the *semivocale* in the ancient classification, that is, the working stock of cattle, and the *instrumentum mutum*, such as carts, ploughs, spades, and so forth, though not all inconsiderable in themselves are very much inferior in utility or in expense;

or, without a given portion of the first, are nothing at all. For, in all things whatever, the mind is the most valuable and the most important; and in this scale the whole of agriculture is in a natural and just order; the beast is as an informing principle to the plough and cart; the labourer is as reason to the beast; and the farmer is as a thinking and presiding principle to the labourer. An attempt to break this chain of subordination in any part is equally absurd; but the absurdity is the most mischievous in practical operation, where it is the most easy, that is, where it is the most subject to an erroneous judgement.

It is plainly more the farmer's interest that his men should thrive, than that his horses should be well fed, sleek, plump, and fit for use, or than that his waggon and ploughs should be strong, in good repair, and fit for service.

On the other hand, if the farmer cease to profit of the labourer, and that his capital is not continually manured and fructified, it is impossible that he should continue that abundant nutriment, and clothing, and lodging, proper for the protection of the instruments he employs.

It is therefore the first and fudamental interest of the labourer that the farmer should have a full incoming profit on the product of his labour. The proposition is self-evident, and nothing but the malignity, perverseness, and ill-governed passions of mankind, and particularly the envy they bear to each other's prosperity, could prevent their seeing and acknowledging it, with thankfulness to the benign and wise Disposer of all things, who obliges men, whether they will or not, in pursuing their own selfish interests, to connect the general good with their own individual success.

But who are to judge what that profit and advantage ought to be? Certainly no authority on earth. It is a matter of convention dictated by the reciprocal conveniences of the parties, and indeed by their reciprocal necessities.—But, if the farmer is excessively avaricious?—Why so much the better—the more he desires to increase his gains, the more interested is he in the

good condition of those, upon whose labour his gains must principally depend.

I shall be told by the zealots of the sect of regulation, that this may be true, and may be safely committed to the convention of the farmer and the labourer, when the latter is in the prime of his youth, and at the time of his health and vigour, and in ordinary times of abundance. But in calamitous seasons, under accidental illness, in declining life, and with the pressure of a numerous offspring, the future nourishers of the community, but the present drains and blood-suckers of those who produce them, what is to be done ? When a man cannot live and maintain his family by the natural hire of his labour, ought it not to be raised by authority ?

On this head I must be allowed to submit what my opinions have ever been ; and somewhat at large.

And, first, I premise that labour is, as I have already intimated, a commodity, and, as such, an article of trade. If I am right in this notion, then labour must be subject to all the laws and principles of trade, and not to regulations foreign to them, and that may be totally inconsistent with those principles and those laws. When any commodity is carried to market, it is not the necessity of the vendor, but the necessity of the purchaser that raises the price. The extreme want of the seller has rather (by the nature of things with which we shall in vain contend) the direct contrary operation. If the goods at market are beyond the demand, they fall in their value ; if below it, they rise. The impossibility of the subsistence of a man, who carries his labour to a market, is totally beside the question in his way of viewing it. The only question is, what is it worth to the buyer ?

But if the authority comes in and forces the buyer to a price, who is this in the case (say) of a farmer, who buys the labour of ten or twelve labouring men, and three or four handicrafts, what is it but to make an arbitrary division of his property among them ?

The whole of his gains, I say it with the most certain

conviction, never do amount anything like in value to what he pays to his labourers and artificers; so that a very small advance upon what *one* man pays to *many* may absorb the whole of what he possesses, and amount to an actual partition of all his substance among them. A perfect equality will indeed be produced;—that is to say, equal want, equal wretchedness, equal beggary, and on the part of the petitioners, a woeful, helpless, and desperate disappointment. Such is the event of all compulsory equalizations. They pull down what is above. They never raise what is below: and they depress high and low together beneath the level of what was originally the lowest.

If a commodity is raised by authority above what it will yield with a profit to the buyer, that commodity will be the less dealt in. If a second blundering interposition be used to correct the blunder of the first, and an attempt is made to force the purchase of the commodity (of labour for instance), the one of these two things must happen, either that the forced buyer is ruined, or the price of the product of the labour, in that proportion is raised. Then the wheel turns round, and the evil complained of falls with aggravated weight on the complainant. The price of corn, which is the result of the expense of all the operations of husbandry taken together, and for some time continued, will rise on the labourer, considered as a consumer. The very best will be, that he remains where he was. But if the price of the corn should not compensate the price of labour, what is far more to be feared, the most serious evil, the very destruction of agriculture itself, is to be apprehended.

Nothing is such an enemy to accuracy of judgement as a coarse discrimination; a want of such classification and distribution as the subject admits of. Increase the rate of wages to the labourer, say the regulators—as if labour was but one thing, and of one value. But this very broad, generic term, *labour*, admits, at least of two or three specific descriptions: and these will suffice, at least, to let gentlemen discern a little the

necessity of proceeding with caution in their coercive guidance of those, whose existence depends upon the observance of still nicer distinctions and sub-divisions, than commonly they resort to in forming their judgements on this very enlarged part of economy.

The labourers in husbandry may be divided: 1st, into those who are able to perform the full work of a man; that is, what can be done by a person from twenty-one years of age to fifty. I know no husbandry work (mowing hardly excepted) that is not equally within the power of all persons within those ages, the more advanced fully compensating by knack and habit what they lose in activity. Unquestionably, there is a good deal of difference between the value of one man's labour and that of another, from strength, dexterity, and honest application. But I am quite sure, from my best observation, that any given five men will, in their total, afford a proportion of labour equal to any other five within the periods of life I have stated; that is, that among such five men there will be one possessing all the qualifications of a good workman, one bad, and the other three middling, and approximating to the first and the last. So that in so small a platoon as that of even five, you will find the full complement of all that five men *can* earn. Taking five and five throughout the kingdom, they are equal: therefore, an error with regard to the equalization of their wages by those who employ five, as farmers do at the very least, cannot be considerable.

2ndly. Those who are able to work, but not the complete task of a day-labourer. This class is infinitely diversified, but will aptly enough fall into principal divisions. *Men*, from the decline, which after fifty becomes every year more sensible, to the period of debility and decrepitude, and the maladies that precede a final dissolution. *Women*, whose employment on husbandry is but occasional, and who differ more in effective labour one from another than men do, on account of gestation, nursing, and domestic management, over and above the difference they have in

common with men in advancing, in stationary, and in declining life. *Children*, who proceed on the reverse order, growing from less to greater utility, but with a still greater disproportion of nutriment to labour than is found in the second of the subdivisions ; as is visible to those who will give themselves the trouble of examining into the interior economy of a poor-house.

This inferior classification is introduced to show that laws prescribing, or magistrates exercising a very stiff, and often inapplicable rule, or a blind and rash discretion, never can provide the just proportions between earning and salary on the one hand, and nutriment on the other : whereas interest, habit, and the tacit convention, that arise from a thousand nameless circumstances, produce a *tact* that regulates without difficulty what laws and magistrates cannot regulate at all. The first class of labour wants nothing to equalize it ; it equalizes itself. The second and third are not capable of any equalization.

But what if the rate of hire to the labourer comes far short of his necessary subsistence, and the calamity of the time is so great as to threaten actual famine ? Is the poor labourer to be abandoned to the flinty heart and griping hand of base self-interest, supported by the sword of law, especially when there is reason to suppose that the very avarice of farmers themselves has concurred with the errors of government to bring famine on the land ?

In that case, my opinion is this : whenever it happens that a man can claim nothing according to the rules of commerce, and the principles of justice, he passes out of that department, and comes within the jurisdiction of mercy. In that province the magistrate has nothing at all to do ; his interference is a violation of the property which it is his office to protect. Without all doubt, charity to the poor is a direct and obligatory duty upon all Christians, next in order after the payment of debts, full as strong, and by nature made infinitely more delightful to us. Puffendorff, and other casuists, do not, I think, denominate it quite properly,

when they call it a duty of imperfect obligation. But the manner, mode, time, choice of objects, and proportion, are left to private discretion; and, perhaps, for that very reason it is performed with the greater satisfaction, because the discharge of it has more the appearance of freedom; recommending us besides very specially to the divine favour, as the exercise of a virtue most suitable to a being sensible of its own infirmity.

The cry of the people in cities and towns, though unfortunately (from a fear of their multitude and combination) the most regarded, ought, in *fact*, to be the *least* attended to upon this subject; for citizens are in a state of utter ignorance of the means by which they are to be fed, and they contribute little or nothing, except in an infinitely circuitous manner, to their own maintenance. They are truly '*fruges consumere nati.*' They are to be heard with great respect and attention upon matters within their province, that is, on trades and manufactures; but on anything that relates to agriculture, they are to be listened to with the same *reverence* which we pay to the dogmas of other ignorant and presumptuous men.

If any one were to tell them that they were to give in an account of all the stock in their shops; that attempts would be made to limit their profits, or raise the price of the labouring manufacturers upon them, or recommend to government, out of a capital from the public revenues, to set up a shop of the same commodities, in order to rival them, and keep them to reasonable dealing, they would very soon see the impudence, injustice, and oppression, of such a course. They would not be mistaken; but they are of opinion that agriculture is to be subject to other laws, and to be governed by other principles.

A greater and more ruinous mistake cannot be fallen into, than that the trades of agriculture and grazing can be conducted upon any other than the common principles of commerce; namely, that the producer should be permitted, and even expected, to look to all

possible profit, which, without fraud or violence, he can make; to turn plenty or scarcity to the best advantage he can; to keep back or to bring forward his commodities at his pleasure; to account to no one for his stock or for his gain. On any other terms he is the slave of the consumer; and that he should be so is of no benefit to the consumer. No slave was ever so beneficial to the master, as a freeman that deals with him on an equal footing by convention, formed on the rules and principles of contending interests and compromised advantages. The consumer, if he were suffered, would in the end always be the dupe of his own tyranny and injustice. The landed gentleman is never to forget that the farmer is his representative.

It is a perilous thing to try experiments on the farmer. The farmer's capital (except in a few persons, and in a very few places) is far more feeble than commonly is imagined. The trade is a very poor trade; it is subject to great risks and losses. The capital, such as it is, is turned but once in the year; in some branches it requires three years before the money is paid. I believe never less than three in the turnip and grass land course, which is the prevalent course on the more or less fertile, sandy and gravelly loams, and these compose the soil in the south and south-east of England, the best adapted, and perhaps the only ones that are adapted to the turnip husbandry.

It is very rare that the most prosperous farmer, counting the value of his quick and dead stock, the interest of the money he turns, together with his own wages as a bailiff or overseer, ever does make twelve or fifteen per centum by the year on his capital. I speak of the prosperous. In most of the parts of England which have fallen within my observation, I have rarely known a farmer who to his own trade has not added some other employment or traffic, that, after a course of the most unremitting parismony and labour (such for the greater part is theirs), and persevering in his business for a long course of years, died worth more than paid his debts, leaving his posterity

to continue in nearly the same equal conflict between industry and want, in which the last predecessor, and a long line of predecessors before him, lived and died.

Observe that I speak of the generality of farmers, who have not more than from one hundred and fifty to three or four hundred acres. There are few in this part of the country within the former, or much beyond the latter extent. Unquestionably in other places there are much larger. But, I am convinced, whatever part of England be the theatre of his operations, a farmer, who cultivates twelve hundred acres, which I consider as a large farm, though I know there are larger, cannot proceed, with any degree of safety and effect, with a smaller capital than ten thousand pounds: and that he cannot, in the ordinary course of culture, make more upon that great capital of ten thousand pounds than twelve hundred a year.

As to the weaker capitals, an easy judgement may be formed by what very small errors they may be farther attenuated, enervated, rendered unproductive, and perhaps totally destroyed.

This constant precariousness, and ultimately moderate limits of a farmer's fortune, on the strongest capital, I press, not only on account of the hazardous speculations of the times, but because the excellent and most useful works of my friend, Mr. Arthur Young, tend to propagate that error (such I am very certain it is), of the largeness of a farmer's profits. It is not that his account of the produce does often greatly exceed, but he by no means makes the proper allowance for accidents and losses. I might enter into a convincing detail, if other more troublesome and more necessary details were not before me.

This proposed discretionary tax on labour militates with the recommendations of the board of agriculture: they recommended a general use of the drill culture. I agree with the board that, where the soil is not excessively heavy, or encumbered with large loose stones (which however is the case with much otherwise good land), that course is the best, and most productive;

provided that the most accurate eye, the most vigilant superintendence, the most prompt activity, which has no such day as to-morrow in its calendar, the most steady foresight and pre-disposing order to have everybody and everything ready in its place, and prepared to take advantage of the fortunate, fugitive moment, in this coquetting climate of ours—provided, I say, all these combine to speed the plough, I admit its superiority over the old and general methods. But under procrastinating, improvident, ordinary husbandmen, who may neglect or let slip the few opportunities of sweetening and purifying their ground with perpetually renovated toil, and undissipated attention, nothing, when tried to any extent, can be worse, or more dangerous: the farm may be ruined, instead of having the soil enriched and sweetened by it.

But the excellence of the method on a proper soil, and conducted by husbandmen, of whom there are few, being readily granted, how, and on what conditions, is this culture obtained? Why, by a very great increase of labour; by an augmentation of the third part, at least, of the hand-labour, to say nothing of the horses and machinery employed in ordinary tillage. Now, every man must be sensible how little becoming the gravity of legislature it is to encourage a board, which recommends to us, and upon very weighty reasons unquestionably, an enlargement of the capital we employ in the operations of the hand, and then to pass an act, which taxes that manual labour, already at a very high rate; thus compelling us to diminish the quantity of labour which in the vulgar course we actually employ.

What is true of the farmer is equally true of the middle man; whether the middle man acts as factor, jobber, salesman, or speculator, in the markets of grain. These traders are to be left to their free course; and the more they make, and the richer they are, and the more largely they deal, the better both for the farmer and consumer, between whom they form a natural and most useful link of connexion; though by the machina-

tions of the old evil counsellor, *Envy*, they are hated and maligned by both parties.

I hear that middle men are accused of monopoly. Without question, the monopoly of authority is, in every instance and in every degree, an evil; but the monopoly of capital is the contrary. It is a great benefit, and a benefit particularly to the poor. A tradesman who has but a hundred pounds capital, which (say) he can turn but once a year, cannot live upon a *profit* of ten per cent., because he cannot live upon ten pounds a year; but a man of the thousand pounds capital can live and thrive upon five per cent. profit in the year, because he has five hundred pounds a year. The same proportion holds in turning it twice or thrice. These principles are plain and simple; and it is not our ignorance, so much as the levity, the envy, and the malignity, of our nature, that hinders us from perceiving and yielding to them: but we are not to suffer our vices to usurp the place of our judgement.

The balance between consumption and production makes price. The market settles, and alone can settle, that price. Market is the meeting and conference of the *consumer* and *producer*, when they mutually discover each other's wants. Nobody, I believe, has observed with any reflection what market is, without being astonished at the truth, the correctness, the celerity, the general equity, with which the balance of wants is settled. They, who wish the destruction of that balance, and would fain by arbitrary regulation decree that defective production should not be compensated by increased price, directly lay their *axe* to the root of production itself.

They may, even in one year of such false policy, do mischiefs incalculable; because the trade of a farmer is, as I have before explained, one of the most precarious in its advantages, the most liable to losses, and the least profitable of any that is carried on. It requires ten times more of labour, or vigilance, of attention, of skill, and, let me add, of good fortune also, to carry on the business of a farmer with success, than what

belongs to any other trade. Seeing things in this light, I am far from presuming to censure the late circular instruction of council to lord-lieutenants—but I confess I do not clearly discern its object. I am greatly afraid that the inquiry will raise some alarm as a measure, leading to the French system of putting corn into requisition. For that was preceded by an inquisition somewhat similar in its principle, though, according to their mode, their principles are full of that violence, *which here* is not much to be feared. It goes on a principle directly opposite to mine: it presumes that the market is no fair *test* of plenty or scarcity. It raises a suspicion, which may affect the tranquillity of the public mind, 'that the farmer keeps back, and takes unfair advantages by delay;' on the part of the dealer, it gives rise obviously to a thousand nefarious speculations.

In case the return should on the whole prove favourable, is it meant to ground a measure for encouraging exportation and checking the import of corn? If it is not, what end can it answer? And, I believe, it is not.

This opinion may be fortified by a report gone abroad that intentions are entertained of erecting public granaries, and that this inquiry is to give government an advantage in its purchases.

I hear that such a measure has been proposed, and is under deliberation; that is, for government to set up a granary in every market town, at the expense of the state, in order to extinguish the dealer, and to subject the farmer to the consumer, by securing corn to the latter at a certain and steady price.

If such a scheme is adopted, I should not like to answer for the safety of the granary, of the agents, or of the town itself, in which the granary was erected; the first storm of popular frenzy would fall upon that granary.

So far in a political light.

In an economical light, I must observe that the construction of such granaries throughout the kingdom would be at an expense beyond all calculation. The

keeping them up would be at a great charge. The management and attendance would require an army of agents, store-keepers, clerks, and servants. The capital to be employed in the purchase of grain would be enormous. The waste, decay, and corruption, would be a dreadful drawback on the whole dealing; and the dissatisfaction of the people, at having decayed, tainted, or corrupted corn sold to them, as must be the case, would be serious.

This climate (whatever others may be) is not favourable to granaries, where wheat is to be kept for any time. The best, and indeed the only good granary, is the rick-yard of the farmer, where the corn is preserved in its own straw, sweet, clean, wholesome, free from vermin and from insects, and comparatively at a trifle of expense. This, and the barn, enjoying many of the same advantages, have been the sole granaries of England from the foundation of its agriculture to this day. All this is done at the expense of the undertaker, and at his sole risk. He contributes to government, he receives nothing from it but protection, and to this he has a *claim.*

The moment that government appears at market, all the principles of market will be subverted. I don't know whether the farmer will suffer by it as long as there is a tolerable market of competition; but I am sure that, in the first place, the trading government will speedily become a bankrupt, and the consumer in the end will suffer. If government makes all its purchases at once, it will instantly raise the market upon itself. If it makes them by degrees, it must follow the course of the market. If it follows the course of the market, it will produce no effect, and the consumer may as well buy as he wants—therefore all the expense is incurred gratis.

But if the object of this scheme should be, what I suspect it is, to destroy the dealer, commonly called the middle man, and by incurring a voluntary loss to carry the baker to deal with government, I am to tell them that they must set up another trade, that of a

miller or a mealman, attended with a new train of expenses and risks. If in both these trades they should succeed, so as to exclude those who trade on natural and private capitals, then they will have a monopoly in their hands, which, under the appearance of a monopoly of capital, will, in reality, be a monopoly of authority, and will ruin whatever it touches. The agriculture of the kingdom cannot stand before it.

A little place like Geneva, of not more than from twenty-five to thirty thousand inhabitants, which has no territory, or next to none; which depends for its existence on the goodwill of three neighbouring powers, and is of course continually in a state of something like a *siege*, or in the speculation of it, might find some resource in state granaries, and some revenue from the monopoly of what was sold to the keepers of public-houses. This is a policy for a state too small for agriculture. It is not (for instance) fit for so great a country as the Pope possesses, where, however, it is adopted and pursued in a greater extent, and with more strictness. Certain of the Pope's territories, from whence the city of Rome is supplied, being obliged to furnish Rome and the granaries of his holiness with corn at a certain price, that part of the papal territories is utterly ruined. That ruin may be traced with certainty to this sole cause, and it appears indubitably by a comparison of their state and condition with that of the other part of the ecclesiastical dominions not subjected to the same regulations, which are in circumstances highly flourishing.

The reformation of this evil system is in a manner impracticable; for, first, it does keep bread and all other provisions equally subject to the chamber of supply, at a pretty reasonable and regular price, in the city of Rome. This preserves quiet among the numerous poor, idle, and naturally mutinous people of a very great capital. But the quiet of the town is purchased by the ruin of the country, and the ultimate wretchedness of both. The next cause which renders this evil incurable, is, the jobs which have grown out

of it, and which, in spite of all precautions, would grow out of such things, even under governments far more potent than the feeble authority of the Pope.

This example of Rome, which has been derived from the most ancient times, and the most flourishing period of the Roman empire (but not of the Roman agriculture), may serve as a great caution to all governments, not to attempt to feed the people out of the hands of the magistrates. If once they are habituated to it, though but for one half-year, they will never be satisfied to have it otherwise. And having looked to government for bread, on the very first scarcity they will turn and bite the hand that fed them. To avoid that *evil*, government will redouble the causes of it; and then it will become inveterate and incurable.

I beseech the government (which I take in the largest sense of the word, comprehending the two Houses of Parliament) seriously to consider that years of scarcity or plenty do not come alternately or at short intervals, but in pretty long cycles and irregularly, and consequently that we cannot assure ourselves, if we take a wrong measure, from the temporary necessities of one season; but that the next, and probably more, will drive us to the continuance of it; so that, in my opinion, there is no way of preventing this evil, which goes to the destruction of all our agriculture, and of that part of our internal commerce which touches our agriculture the most nearly, as well as the safety and very being of government, but manfully to resist the very first idea, speculative or practical, that it is within the competence of government, taken as government, or even of the rich, as rich, to supply to the poor those necessaries which it has pleased the Divine Providence for a while to withhold from them. We, the people, ought to be made sensible, that it is not in breaking the laws of commerce, which are the laws of nature, and consequently the laws of God, that we are to place our hope of softening the Divine displeasure to remove any calamity under which we suffer, or which hangs over us.

So far as to the principles of general policy.

As to the state of things which is urged as a reason to deviate from them, these are the circumstances of the harvest of 1794 and 1795. With regard to the harvest of 1794, in relation to the noblest grain—wheat, it is allowed to have been somewhat short, but not excessively; and, in quality, for the seven-and-twenty years, during which I have been a farmer, I never remember wheat to have been so good. The world were, however, deceived in their speculations upon it—the farmer as well as the dealer. Accordingly the price fluctuated beyond anything I can remember; for, at one time of the year, I sold my wheat at £14 a load (I sold off all I had, as I thought this was a reasonable price), when at the end of the season, if I had then had any to sell, I might have got thirty guineas for the same sort of grain. I sold all that I had, as I said, at a comparatively low price, because I thought it a good price, compared with what I thought the general produce of the harvest; but when I came to consider what my own *total* was, I found that the quantity had not answered my expectation. It must be remembered that this year of produce (the year 1794), short, but excellent, followed a year which was not extraordinary in production, nor of a superior quality, and left but little in store. At first this was not felt, because the harvest came in unusually early—earlier than common, by a full month.

The winter, at the end of 1794, and beginning of 1795, was more than usually unfavourable both to corn and grass, owing to the sudden relaxation of very rigorous frosts, followed by rains, which were again rapidly succeeded by frosts of still greater rigour than the first.

Much wheat was utterly destroyed. The clover-grass suffered in many places. What I never observed before, the rye-grass, or coarse bent, suffered more than the clover. Even the meadow-grass in some places was killed to the very roots. In the spring, appearances were better than we expected. All the early sown grain recovered itself, and came up with great vigour;

but that, which was late sown, was feeble, and did not promise to resist any blights in the spring, which, however, with all its unpleasant vicissitudes passed off very well; and nothing looked better than the wheat at the time of blooming:—but at that most critical time of all a cold, dry east wind, attended with very sharp frosts, longer and stronger than I recollect at that time of year, destroyed the flowers, and withered up, in an astonishing manner, the whole side of the ear next to the wind. At that time I brought to town some of the ears, for the purpose of showing to my friends the operation of those unnatural frosts, and according to their extent I predicted a great scarcity. But such is the pleasure of agreeable prospects that my opinion was little regarded.

On threshing, I found things as I expected—the ears not filled, some of the capsules quite empty, and several others containing only withered, hungry grain, inferior to the appearance of rye. My best ears and grain were not fine; never had I grain of so low a quality—yet I sold one load for £21. At the same time I bought my seed wheat (it was excellent) at £23. Since then the price has risen, and I have sold about two loads of the same sort at £23. Such was the state of the market when I left home last Monday. Little remains in my barn. I hope some in the rick may be better, since it was earlier sown, as well as I can recollect. Some of my neighbours have better, some quite as bad, or even worse. I suspect it will be found that, wherever the blighting wind and those frosts at blooming time have prevailed, the produce of the wheat crop will turn out very indifferent. Those parts which have escaped will, I can hardly doubt, have a reasonable produce.

As to the other grains, it is to be observed, as the wheat ripened very late (on account, I conceive, of the blights) the barley got the start of it, and was ripe first. The crop was with me, and wherever my inquiry could reach, excellent; in some places far superior to mine.

The clover, which came up with the barley, was the finest I remember to have seen.

The turnips of this year are generally good.

The clover sown last year, where not totally destroyed, gave two good crops, or one crop and a plentiful feed; and, bating the loss of the rye-grass, I do not remember a better produce.

The meadow-grass yielded but a middling crop, and neither of the sown or natural grass was there in any farmer's possession any remainder from the year worth taking into account. In most places, there was none at all.

Oats with me were not in a quantity more considerable than in commonly good seasons; but I have never known them heavier than they were in other places. The oat was not only a heavy, but an uncommonly abundant crop. My ground under pease did not exceed an acre, or thereabouts, but the crop was great indeed. I believe it is throughout the country exuberant.

It is however to be remarked, as generally of all the grains, so particularly of the pease, that there was not the smallest quantity of reserve.

The demand of the year must depend solely on its own produce; and the price of the spring-corn is not to be expected to fall very soon, or at any time very low.

Uxbridge is a great corn market. As I came through that town, I found that, at the last market-day, barley was at forty shillings a quarter; oats there were literally none; and the innkeeper was obliged to send for them to London. I forgot to ask about pease. Potatoes were 5*s*. the bushel.

In the debate on this subject in the House, I am told that a leading member of great ability, *little conversant in these matters*, observed that the general uniform dearness of butcher's meat, butter and cheese, could not be owing to a defective produce of wheat; and on this ground insinuated a suspicion of some unfair practice on the subject, that called for inquiry.

Unquestionably the mere deficiency of wheat could not cause the dearness of the other articles, which ex-

tend not only to the provisions he mentioned, but to every other without exception.

The cause is indeed so very plain and obvious, that the wonder is the other way. When a properly directed inquiry is made, the gentlemen who are amazed at the price of these commodities will find that, when hay is at six pounds a load, as they must know it is, herbage for more than one year must be scanty, and they will conclude that, if grass be scarce, beef, veal, mutton, butter, milk, and cheese, *must* be dear.

But to take up the matter somewhat more in detail—if the wheat harvest in 1794, excellent in quality, was defective in quantity, the barley harvest was in quality ordinary enough; and in quantity deficient. This was soon felt in the price of malt.

Another article of produce (beans) was not at all plentiful. The crop of pease was wholly destroyed, so that several farmers pretty early gave up all hopes on that head, and cut the green haulm as fodder for the cattle, then perishing for want of food in that dry and burning summer. I myself came off better than most—I had about the fourth of a crop of pease.

It will be recollected that, in a manner, all the bacon and pork consumed in this country (the far largest consumption of meat out of towns) is, when growing, fed on grass, and on whey, or skimmed milk; and when fatting, partly on the latter. This is the case in the dairy countries, all of them great breeders and feeders of swine; but for the much greater part, and in all the corn countries, they are fattened on beans, barley-meal, and pease. When the food of the animal is scarce, his flesh must be dear. This, one would suppose, would require no great penetration to discover.

This failure of so very large a supply of flesh in one species naturally throws the whole demand of the consumer on the diminished supply of all kinds of flesh, and, indeed, on all the matters of human sustenance. Nor, in my opinion, are we to expect a greater cheapness in that article for this year, even though corn should

grow cheaper, as it is to be hoped it will. The store swine, from the failure of subsistence last year, are now at an extravagant price. Pigs, at our fairs, have sold lately for fifty shillings, which, two years ago, would not have brought more than twenty.

As to sheep, none, I thought, were strangers to the general failure of the article of turnips last year; the early having been burned, as they came up, by the great drought and heat; the late, and those of the early which had escaped, were destroyed by the chilling frosts of the winter, and the wet and severe weather of the spring. In many places a full fourth of the sheep or the lambs were lost; what remained of the lambs were poor and ill fed, the ewes having had no milk. The calves came late, and they were generally an article, the want of which was as much to be dreaded as any other. So that article of food, formerly so abundant in the early part of the summer, particularly in London, and which in a great part supplied the place of mutton for nearly two months, did little less than totally fail.

All the productions of the earth link in with each other. All the sources of plenty, in all and every article, were dried or frozen up. The scarcity was not, as gentlemen seem to suppose, in wheat only.

Another cause, and that not of inconsiderable operation, tended to produce a scarcity in flesh provision. It is one that on many accounts cannot be too much regretted, and the rather, as it was the sole *cause* of a scarcity in that article, which arose from the proceedings of men themselves. I mean the stop put to the distillery.

The hogs (and that would be sufficient) which were fed with the waste wash of that produce, did not demand the fourth part of the corn used by farmers in fattening them. The spirit was nearly so much clear gain to the nation. It is an odd way of making flesh cheap, to stop or check the distillery.

The distillery in itself produces an immense article of trade almost all over the world, to Africa, to North

America, and to various parts of Europe. It is of great use, next to food itself, to our fisheries and to our whole navigation. A great part of the distillery was carried on by damaged corn, unfit for bread, and by barley and malt of the lowest quality. These things could not be more unexceptionally employed. The domestic consumption of spirits produced, without complaints, a very great revenue, applicable, if we pleased, in bounties to the bringing corn from other places, far beyond the value of that consumed in making it, or to the encouragement of its increased production at home.

As to what is said, in a physical and moral view, against the home consumption of spirits, experience has long since taught me very little to respect the declamations on that subject—Whether the thunder of the laws, or the thunder of eloquence, 'is hurled on *gin*,' always I am thunder-proof. The alembic, in my mind, has furnished the world a far greater benefit and blessing, than if the *opus maximum* had been really found by chemistry, and, like Midas, we could turn everything into gold.

Undoubtedly there may be a dangerous abuse in the excess of spirits; and at one time I am ready to believe the abuse was great. When spirits are cheap, the business of drunkenness is achieved with little time or labour; but that evil I consider to be wholly done away. Observation for the last forty years, and very particularly for the last thirty, has furnished me with ten instances of drunkenness from other causes, for one from this. Ardent spirit is a great medicine, often to remove distempers—much more frequently to prevent them, or to chase them away in their beginnings. It is not nutritive in *any great* degree. But if not food, it greatly alleviates the want of it. It invigorates the stomach for the digestion of poor meagre diet, not easily alliable to the human constitution. Wine the poor cannot touch. Beer, as applied to many occasions (as among seamen and fishermen for instance), will by no means do the business. Let me add, what wits

inspired with champagne and claret will turn into ridicule—it is a medicine for the mind. Under the pressure of the cares and sorrows of our mortal condition, men have at all times, and in all countries, called in some physical aid to their moral consolations,—wine, beer, opium, brandy, or tobacco.

I consider, therefore, the stopping of the distillery, economically, financially, commercially, medicinally, and, in some degree, morally too, as a measure rather well meant than well considered. It is too precious a sacrifice to prejudice.

Gentlemen well know whether there be a scarcity of partridges, and whether that be an effect of hoarding and combination. All the tame race of birds live and die as the wild do.

As to the lesser articles, they are like the greater. They have followed the fortune of the season. Why are fowls dear ? was not this the farmer's or jobber's fault ? I sold from my yard to a jobber six young and lean fowls for four-and-twenty shillings ; fowls, for which, two years ago, the same man would not have given a shilling apiece.—He sold them afterwards at Uxbridge, and they were taken to London to receive the last hand.

As to the operation of the war in causing the scarcity of provisions, I understand that Mr. Pitt has given a particular answer to it—but I do not think it worth powder and shot.

I do not wonder the papers are so full of this sort of matter, but I am a little surprised it should be mentioned in parliament. Like all great state questions, peace and war may be discussed, and different opinions fairly formed, on political grounds, but on a question of the present price of provisions, when peace with the regicides is always uppermost, I can only say that great is the love of it.

After all, have we not reason to be thankful to the Giver of all good ? In our history, and when 'the labourer of England is said to have been once happy,' we find constantly, after certain intervals, a period of

real famine; by which, a melancholy havoc was made among the human race. The price of provisions fluctuated dreadfully, demonstrating a deficiency very different from the worst failures of the present moment. Never, since I have known England, have I known more than a comparative scarcity. The price of wheat, taking a number of years together, has had no very considerable fluctuation, nor has it risen exceedingly until within this twelvemonth. Even now, I do not know of one man, woman, or child, that has perished from famine; fewer, if any, I believe, than in years of plenty, when such a thing may happen by accident. This is owing to a care and superintendence of the poor, far greater than any I remember.

The consideration of this ought to bind us all, rich and poor together, against those wicked writers of the newspapers, who would inflame the poor against their friends, guardians, patrons, and protectors. Not only very few (I have observed that I know of none, though I live in a place as poor as most) have actually died of want, but we have seen no traces of those dreadful exterminating epidemics, which, in consequence of scanty and unwholesome food, in former times, not unfrequently wasted whole nations. Let us be saved from too much wisdom of our own, and we shall do tolerably well.

It is one of the finest problems in legislation, and what has often engaged my thoughts whilst I followed that profession, 'what the state ought to take upon itself to direct by the public wisdom, and what it ought to leave, with as little interference as possible, to individual discretion.' Nothing, certainly, can be laid down on the subject that will not admit of exceptions, many permanent, some occasional. But the clearest line of distinction which I could draw, whilst I had my chalk to draw any line, was this; that the state ought to confine itself to what regards the state, or the creatures of the state, namely, the exterior establishment of its religion; its magistracy; its revenue; its military force by sea and land; the corporations that

owe their existence to its fiat; in a word, to everything that is *truly and properly* public, to the public peace, to the public safety, to the public order, to the public prosperity. In its preventive police it ought to be sparing of its efforts, and to employ means, rather few, unfrequent, and strong, than many, and frequent, and, of course, as they multiply their puny politic race, and dwindle, small and feeble. Statesmen who know themselves will, with the dignity which belongs to wisdom, proceed only in this the superior orb, and first mover of their duty steadily, vigilantly, severely, courageously: whatever remains will, in a manner, provide for itself. But as they descend from the state to a province, from a province to a parish, and from a parish to a private house, they go on accelerated in their fall. They *cannot* do the lower duty; and, in proportion as they try it, they will certainly fail in the higher. They ought to know the different departments of things; what belongs to laws, and what manners alone can regulate. To these, great politicians may give a leaning, but they cannot give a law.

Our legislature has fallen into this fault as well as other governments; all have fallen into it more or less. The once mighty state, which was nearest to us locally, nearest to us in every way, and whose ruins threaten to fall upon our heads, is a strong instance of this error. I can never quote France without a foreboding sigh—ΕΣΕΤΑΙ ἭΜΑΡ! Scipio said it to his recording Greek friend amidst the flames of the great rival of his country. That state has fallen by the hands of the parricides of their country, called the revolutionists, and constitutionalists, of France; a species of traitors, of whose fury and atrocious wickedness nothing in the annals of the frenzy and depravation of mankind had before furnished an example, and of whom I can never think or speak without a mixed sensation of disgust, of horror, and of detestation, not easy to be expressed. These nefarious monsters destroyed their country for what was good in it: for much good there was in the constitution of that noble monarchy, which, in all

kinds, formed and nourished great men, and great patterns of virtue to the world. But though its enemies were not enemies to its faults, its faults furnished them with means for its destruction. My dear departed friend, whose loss is even greater to the public than to me, had often remarked, that the leading vice of the French monarchy (which he had well studied) was in good intention ill-directed, and a restless desire of governing too much. The hand of authority was seen in everything, and in every place. All, therefore, that happened amiss in the course even of domestic affairs, was attributed to the government; and as it always happens in this kind of officious universal interference what began in odious power, ended always, I may say without an exception, in contemptible imbecility. For this reason, as far as I can approve of any novelty, I thought well of the provincial administrations. Those, if the superior power had been severe, and vigilant, and vigorous might have been of much use politically in removing government from many invidious details. But as everything is good or bad, as it is related or combined, government being relaxed above as it was relaxed below, and the brains of the people growing more and more addle with every sort of visionary speculation, the shiftings of the scene in the provincial theatres became only preparatives to a revolution in the kingdom, and the popular actings there only the rehearsals of the terrible drama of the republic.

Tyranny and cruelty may make men justly wish the downfall of abused powers, but I believe that no government ever yet perished from any other direct cause than its own weakness. My opinion is against an over-doing of any sort of administration, and more especially against this most momentous of all meddling on the part of authority; the meddling with the subsistence of the people.

A

LETTER TO A NOBLE LORD

ON THE

ATTACKS MADE UPON MR. BURKE AND HIS PENSION, IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS

BY

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD

AND THE

EARL OF LAUDERDALE

EARLY IN THE PRESENT SESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT

1796

A LETTER

&c., &c.

My Lord,

I could hardly flatter myself with the hope that so very early in the season I should have to acknowledge obligations to the Duke of Bedford and to the Earl of Lauderdale. These noble persons have lost no time in conferring upon me that sort of honour, which it is alone within their competence, and which it is certainly most congenial to their nature and their manners to bestow.

To be ill-spoken of, in whatever language they speak, by the zealots of the new sect in philosophy and politics, of which these noble persons think so charitably, and of which others think so justly, to me, is no matter of uneasiness or surprise. To have incurred the displeasure of the Duke of Orleans or the Duke of Bedford, to fall under the censure of citizen Brissot or of his friend the Earl of Lauderdale, I ought to consider as proofs, not the least satisfactory, that I have produced some part of the effect I proposed by my endeavours. I have laboured hard to earn what the noble lords are generous enough to pay. Personal offence I have given them none. The part they take against me is from zeal to the cause. It is well! It is perfectly well! I have to do homage to their justice. I have to thank the Bedfords and the Lauderdales for having so faithfully and so fully acquitted towards me whatever arrear of debt was left undischarged by the Priestleys and the Paines.

Some, perhaps, may think them executors in their own wrong: I at least have nothing to complain of. They have gone beyond the demands of justice. They have been (a little perhaps beyond their intention)

favourable to me. They have been the means of bringing out by their invectives the handsome things which Lord Grenville has had the goodness and condescension to say in my behalf. Retired as I am from the world, and from all its affairs and all its pleasures, I confess it does kindle, in my nearly extinguished feelings, a very vivid satisfaction to be so attacked and so commended. It is soothing to my wounded mind, to be commended by an able, vigorous, and well-informed statesman, and at the very moment when he stands forth with a manliness and resolution, worthy of himself and of his cause, for the preservation of the person and government of our sovereign, and therein for the security of the laws, the liberties, the morals, and the lives of his people. To be in any fair way connected with such things is indeed a distinction. No philosophy can make me above it: no melancholy can depress me so low, as to make me wholly insensible to such an honour.

Why will they not let me remain in obscurity and inaction? Are they apprehensive that, if an atom of me remains, the sect has something to fear? Must I be annihilated, lest, like old *John Zisca's*, my skin might be made into a drum, to animate Europe to eternal battle, against a tyranny that threatens to overwhelm all Europe, and all the human race?

My lord, it is a subject of awful meditation. Before this of France, the annals of all time have not furnished an instance of a *complete* revolution. That revolution seems to have extended even to the constitution of the mind of man. It has this of wonderful in it, that it resembles what Lord Verulam says of the operations of nature: It was perfect, not only in its elements and principles, but in all its members and its organs from the very beginning. The moral scheme of France furnishes the only pattern ever known which they who admire will *instantly* resemble. It is indeed an inexhaustible repertory of one kind of examples. In my wretched condition though hardly to be classed with the living, I am not safe from them. They have tigers to

fall upon animated strength. They have hyenas to prey upon carcasses. The national menagerie is collected by the first physiologists of the time; and it is defective in no description of savage nature. They pursue even such as me, into the obscurest retreats, and haul them before their revolutionary tribunals. Neither sex, nor age—nor the sanctuary of the tomb, is sacred to them. They have so determined a hatred to all privileged orders, that they deny even to the departed the sad immunities of the grave. They are not wholly without an object. Their turpitude purveys to their malice; and they unplumb the dead for bullets to assassinate the living. If all revolutionists were not proof against all caution, I should recommend it to their consideration, that no persons were ever known in history, either sacred or profane, to vex the sepulchre, and, by their sorceries, to call up the prophetic dead, with any other event, than the prediction of their own disastrous fate.—'Leave me, oh leave me to repose!'

In one thing I can excuse the Duke of Bedford for his attack upon me and my mortuary pension. He cannot readily comprehend the transaction he condemns. What I have obtained was the fruit of no bargain; the production of no intrigue; the result of no compromise; the effect of no solicitation. The first suggestion of it never came from me, mediately or immediately, to his majesty or any of his ministers. It was long known that the instant my engagements would permit it, and before the heaviest of all calamities had for ever condemned me to obscurity and sorrow, I had resolved on a total retreat. I had executed that design. I was entirely out of the way of serving or of hurting any statesman, or any party, when the ministers so generously and so nobly carried into effect the spontaneous bounty of the crown. Both descriptions have acted as became them. When I could no longer serve them, the ministers have considered my situation. When I could no longer hurt them, the revolutionists have trampled on my infirmity. My gratitude, I trust, is equal to the manner in which the benefit was conferred.

It came to me indeed, at a time of life, and in a state of mind and body, in which no circumstance of fortune could afford me any real pleasure. But this was no fault in the royal donor, or in his ministers, who were pleased, in acknowledging the merits of an invalid servant of the public, to assuage the sorrows of a desolate old man.

It would ill become me to boast of anything. It would as ill become me, thus called upon, to depreciate the value of a long life, spent with unexampled toil in the service of my country. Since the total body of my services, on account of the industry which was shown in them, and the fairness of my intentions, have obtained the acceptance of my sovereign, it would be absurd in me to range myself on the side of the Duke of Bedford and the Corresponding Society, or, as far as in me lies, to permit a dispute on the rate at which the authority appointed by *our* constitution to estimate such things has been pleased to set them.

Loose libels ought to be passed by in silence and contempt. By me they have been so always. I knew that as long as I remained in public, I should live down the calumnies of malice, and the judgements of ignorance. If I happened to be now and then in the wrong, (as who is not ?) like all other men, I must bear the consequence of my faults and my mistakes. The libels of the present day are just of the same stuff as the libels of the past. But they derive an importance from the rank of the persons they come from, and the gravity of the place where they were uttered. In some way or other I ought to take some notice of them. To assert myself thus traduced is not vanity or arrogance. It is a demand of justice ; it is a demonstration of gratitude. If I am unworthy, the ministers are worse than prodigal. On that hypothesis, I perfectly agree with the Duke of Bedford.

For whatever I have been (I am now no more) I put myself on my country. I ought to be allowed a reasonable freedom, because I stand upon my deliverance ; and no culprit ought to plead in irons. Even

in the utmost latitude of defensive liberty, I wish to preserve all possible decorum. Whatever it may be in the eyes of these noble persons themselves, to me their situation calls for the most profound respect. If I should happen to trespass a little, which I trust I shall not, let it always be supposed, that a confusion of characters may produce mistakes; that, in the masquerades of the grand carnival of our age, whimsical adventures happen; odd things are said and pass off. If I should fail a single point in the high respect I owe to those illustrious persons, I cannot be supposed to mean the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale of the House of Peers, but the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale of Palace-Yard; —The Dukes and Earls of Brentford. There they are on the pavement; there they seem to come nearer to my humble level; and, virtually at least, to have waived their high privilege.

Making this protestation, I refuse all revolutionary tribunals, where men have been put to death for no other reason than that they had obtained favours from the crown. I claim, not the letter, but the spirit of the old English law, that is, to be tried by my peers. I decline his grace's jurisdiction as a judge. I challenge the Duke of Bedford as a juror to pass upon the value of my services. Whatever his natural parts may be, I cannot recognize, in his few and idle years, the competence to judge of my long and laborious life. If I can help it, he shall not be on the inquest of my *quantum meruit*. Poor rich man! He can hardly know anything of public industry in its exertions, or can estimate its compensations when its work is done. I have no doubt of his grace's readiness in all the calculations of vulgar arithmetic; but I shrewdly suspect that he is little studied in the theory of moral proportions; and has never learned the rule of three in the arithmetic of policy and state.

His grace thinks I have obtained too much. I answer that my exertions, whatever they have been, were such as no hopes of pecuniary reward could

possibly excite; and no pecuniary compensation can possibly reward them. Between money and such services, if done by abler men that I am, there is no common principle of comparison: they are quantities incommensurable. Money is made for the comfort and convenience of animal life. It cannot be a reward for what mere animal life must, indeed, sustain, but never can inspire. With submission to his grace, I have not had more than sufficient. As to any noble use, I trust I know how to employ, as well as he, a much greater fortune than he possesses. In a more confined application, I certainly stand in need of every kind of relief and easement much more than he does. When I say I have not received more than I deserve, is this the language I hold to majesty? No! Far, very far, from it! Before that presence, I claim no merit at all. Everything towards me is favour, and bounty. One style to a gracious benefactor; another to a proud and insulting foe.

His grace is pleased to aggravate my guilt by charging my acceptance of his majesty's grant as a departure from my ideas, and the spirit of my conduct with regard to economy. If it be, my ideas of economy were false and ill-founded. But they are the Duke of Bedford's ideas of economy I have contradicted, and not my own. If he means to allude to certain bills brought in by me on the message from the throne in 1782, I tell him that there is nothing in my conduct that can contradict either the letter or the spirit of those acts. Does he mean the pay-office act? I take it for granted he does not. The act to which he alludes is, I suppose, the establishment act. I greatly doubt whether his grace has ever read the one or the other. The first of these systems cost me, with every assistance which my then situation gave me, pains incredible. I found an opinion common through all the offices, and general in the public at large, that it would prove impossible to reform and methodize the office of paymaster-general. I undertook it, however; and I succeeded in my undertaking. Whether the military service, or whether the

general economy of our finances have profited by that act, I leave to those who are acquainted with the army, and with the treasury, to judge.

An opinion full as general prevailed also at the same time that nothing could be done for the regulation of the civil list establishment. The very attempt to introduce method into it, and any limitations to its services, was held absurd. I had not seen the man, who so much as suggested one economical principle, or an economical expedient, upon that subject. Nothing but coarse amputation, or coarser taxation, were then talked of, both of them without design, combination, or the least shadow of principle. Blind and headlong zeal, or factious fury, were the whole contribution brought by the most noisy on that occasion, towards the satisfaction of the public, or the relief of the crown.

Let me tell my youthful censor that the necessities of that time required something very different from what other then suggested, or what his grace now conceives. Let me inform him that it was one of the most critical periods in our annals.

Astronomers have supposed that if a certain comet, whose path intercepted the ecliptic, had met the earth in some (I forget what) sign, it would have whirled us along with it, in its eccentric course, into God knows what regions of heat and cold. Had the portentous comet of the rights of man, (which 'from its horrid hair shakes pestilence and war,' and 'with fear of change perplexes monarchs,') had that comet crossed upon us in that internal state of England, nothing human could have prevented our being irresistibly hurried, out of the highway of heaven, into all the vices, crimes, horrors, and miseries of the French Revolution.

Happily, France was not then Jacobinized. Her hostility was at a good distance. We had a limb cut off; but we preserved the body: we lost our colonies; but we kept our constitution. There was, indeed, much intestine heat; there was a dreadful fermenta-

tion. Wild and savage insurrection quitted the woods and prowled about our streets in the name of reform. Such was the distemper of the public mind, that there was no madman, in his maddest ideas and maddest projects, who might not count upon numbers to support his principles and execute his designs.

Many of the changes, by a great misnomer called parliamentary reforms, went, not in the intention of all the professors and supporters of them, undoubtedly, but went in their certain, and, in my opinion, not very remote effect, home to the utter destruction of the constitution of this kingdom. Had they taken place, not France, but England, would have had the honour of leading up the death-dance of a democratic revolution. Other projects, exactly coincident in time with those, struck at the very existence of the kingdom under any constitution. There are who remember the blind fury of some, and the lamentable helplessness of others; here, a torpid confusion, from a panic fear of the danger; there, the same inaction from a stupid insensibility to it; here, well-wishers to the mischief; there, indifferent lookers-on. At the same time, a sort of national convention, dubious in its nature, and perilous in its example, nosed parliament in the very seat of its authority; sat with a sort of superintendence over it; and little less than dictated to it, not only laws, but the very form and essence of legislature itself. In Ireland things ran in a still more eccentric course. Government was unnerved, confounded, and in a manner suspended. Its equipoise was totally gone. I do not mean to speak disrespectfully of Lord North. He was a man of admirable parts; of general knowledge: of a versatile understanding fitted for every sort of business; of infinite wit and pleasantry; of a delightful temper; and with a mind most perfectly disinterested. But it would be only to degrade myself by a weak adulation, and not to honour the memory of a great man, to deny that he wanted something of the vigilance and spirit of command that the time required. Indeed, a darkness, next to the fog of this awful day,

loured over the whole region. For a little time the helm appeared abandoned—

> Ipse diem noctemque negat discernere coelo,
> Nec meminisse viae mediâ Palinurus in undâ.

At that time I was connected with men of high place in the community. They loved liberty as much as the Duke of Bedford can do; and they understood it at least as well. Perhaps their politics, as usual, took a tincture from their character, and they cultivated what they loved. The liberty they pursued was a liberty inseparable from order, from virtue, from morals, and from religion; and was neither hypocritically nor fanatically followed. They did not wish that liberty, in itself one of the first of blessings, should in its perversion become the greatest curse which could fall upon mankind. To preserve the constitution entire, and practically equal to all the great ends of its reformation, not in one single part, but in all its parts, was to them the first object. Popularity and power they regarded alike. These were with them only different means of obtaining that object; and had no preference over each other in their minds, but as one or the other might afford a surer or a less certain prospect of arriving at that end. It is some consolation to me in the cheerless gloom, which darkens the evening of my life, that with them I commenced my political career, and never for a moment, in reality, nor in appearance, for any length of time, was separated from their good wishes and good opinion.

By what accident it matters not, nor upon what desert, but just then, and in the midst of that hunt of obloquy, which ever has pursued me with a full cry through life, I had obtained a very considerable degree of public confidence. I know well enough how equivocal a test this kind of popular opinion forms of the merit that obtained it. I am no stranger to the insecurity of its tenure. I do not boast of it. It is mentioned to show, not how highly I prize the thing, but my right to value the use I made of it. I endeavoured to turn

that short-lived advantage to myself into a permanent benefit to my country. Far am I from detracting from the merit of some gentlemen, out of office or in it, on that occasion. No !—It is not my way to refuse a full and heaped measure of justice to the aids that I receive. I have, through life, been willing to give everything to others ; and to reserve nothing for myself, but the inward conscience, that I had omitted no pains to discover, to animate, to discipline, to direct the abilities of the country for its service, and to place them in the best light to improve their age, or to adorn it. This conscience I have. I have never suppressed any man ; never checked him for a moment in his course, by any jealousy, or by any policy. I was always ready, to the height of my means (and they were always infinitely below my desires), to forward those abilities which overpowered my own. He is an ill-furnished undertaker, who has no machinery but his own hands to work with. Poor in my own faculties, I ever thought myself rich in theirs. In that period of difficulty and danger, more especially, I consulted, and sincerely cooperated with, men of all parties, who seemed disposed to the same ends, or to any main part of them. Nothing to prevent disorder was omitted : when it appeared, nothing to subdue it was left uncounselled, nor unexecuted, as far as I could prevail. At the time I speak of, and having a momentary lead, so aided and so encouraged, and as a feeble instrument in a mighty hand—I do not say I saved my country ; I am sure I did my country important service. There were few, indeed, that did not at that time acknowledge it, and that time was thirteen years ago. It was but one voice, that no man in the kingdom better deserved an honourable provision should be made for him.

So much for my general conduct through the whole of the portentous crisis from 1780 to 1782, and the general sense then entertained of that conduct by my country. But my character, as a reformer, in the particular instances which the Duke of Bedford refers to, is so connected in principle with my opinions

on the hideous changes, which have since barbarized France, and, spreading thence, threaten the political and moral order of the whole world, that it seems to demand something of a more detailed discussion.

My economical reforms were not, as his grace may think, the suppression of a paltry pension or employment, more or less. Economy in my plans was, as it ought to be, secondary, subordinate, instrumental. I acted on state principles. I found a great distemper in the commonwealth; and, according to the nature of the evil and of the object, I treated it. The malady was deep; it was complicated, in the causes and in the symptoms. Throughout it was full of contra-indicants. On one hand government, daily growing more invidious from an apparent increase of the means of strength, was every day growing more contemptible by real weakness. Nor was this dissolution confined to government commonly so called. It extended to parliament; which was losing not a little in its dignity and estimation, by an opinion of its not acting on worthy motives. On the other hand, the desires of the people (partly natural and partly infused into them by art), appeared in so wild and inconsiderate a manner, with regard to the economical object (for I set aside for a moment the dreadful tampering with the body of the constitution itself), that, if their petitions had literally been complied with, the state would have been convulsed; and a gate would have been opened, through which all property might be sacked and ravaged. Nothing could have saved the public from the mischiefs of the false reform but its absurdity; which would soon have brought itself, and with it all real reform, into discredit. This would have left a rankling wound in the hearts of the people, who would know they had failed in the accomplishment of their wishes, but, who, like the rest of mankind in all ages, would impute the blame to anything rather than to their own proceedings. But there were then persons in the world, who nourished complaint; and would have been thoroughly disappointed if the people were ever satisfied. I was not

of that humour. I wished that they *should* be satisfied. It was my aim to give to the people the substance of what I knew they desired, and what I thought was right, whether they desired it or not, before it had been modified for them into senseless petitions. I knew that there is a manifest, marked distinction, which ill men, with ill designs, or weak men incapable of any design, will constantly be confounding, that is, a marked distinction between change and reformation. The former alters the substance of the objects themselves; and gets rid of all their essential good, as well as of all the accidental evil annexed to them. Change is novelty; and whether it is to operate any one of the effects of reformation at all, or whether it may not contradict the very principle upon which reformation is desired, cannot be certainly known beforehand. Reform is not a change in the substance or in the primary modification of the object, but a direct application of a remedy to the grievance complained of. So far as that is removed, all is sure. It stops there; and, if it fails, the substance which underwent the operation, at the very worst, is but where it was.

All this, in effect, I think, but am not sure, I have said elsewhere. It cannot at this time be too often repeated; line upon line; precept upon precept; until it comes into the currency of a proverb, *to innovate is not to reform.* The French revolutionists complained of everything; they refused to reform anything; and they left nothing, no, nothing at all *unchanged.* The consequences are *before* us,—not in remote history; not in future prognostication: they are about us; they are upon us. They shake the public security; they menace private enjoyment. They dwarf the growth of the young; they break the quiet of the old. If we travel, they stop our way. They infest us in town; they pursue us to the country. Our business is interrupted; our repose is troubled; our pleasures are saddened; our very studies are poisoned and perverted, and knowledge is rendered worse than ignorance, by the enormous evils of this dreadful

innovation. The revolution harpies of France, sprung from night and hell, or from that chaotic anarchy, which generates equivocally 'all monstrous, all prodigious things,' cuckoo-like, adulterously lay their eggs, and brood over, and hatch them in the nest of every neighbouring state. These obscene harpies, who deck themselves in I know not what divine attributes, but who in reality are foul and ravenous birds of prey, (both mothers and daughters,) flutter over our heads, and souse down upon our tables, and leave nothing unrent, unrifled, unravaged, or unpolluted with the slime of their filthy offal[1].

If his grace can contemplate the result of this complete innovation, or, as some friends of his will call it, *reform*, in the whole body of its solidity and compound mass, at which, as Hamlet says, the face of heaven glows with horror and indignation, and which, in truth, makes every reflecting mind and every feeling heart perfectly thought-sick, without a thorough abhorrence of everything they say, and everything they do, I am amazed at the morbid strength, or the natural infirmity of his mind.

It was then not my love, but my hatred, to innovation, that produced my plan of reform. Without troubling myself with the exactness of the logical dia-

[1] Tristius haud illis monstrum, nec saevior ulla
Pestis, et ira Deûm Stygiis sese extulit undis.
Virginei volucrum vultus; foedissima ventris
Proluvies; uncaeque manus; et pallida semper
Ora fame.

Here the poet breaks the line, because he (and that he is Virgil) had not verse or language to describe that monster even as he had conceived her. Had he lived in our time, he would have been more overpowered with the reality than he was with the imagination. Virgil only knew the horror of the times before him. Had he lived to see the revolutionists and constitutionalists of France, he would have had more horrid and disgusting features of his harpies to describe, and more frequent failures in the attempt to describe them.

gram, I considered them as things substantially opposite. It was to prevent that evil that I proposed the measures which his grace is pleased, and I am not sorry he is pleased, to recall to my recollection. I had (what I hope that noble duke will remember in all its operations) a state to preserve, as well as a state to reform. I had a people to gratify, but not to inflame or to mislead. I do not claim half the credit for what I did, as for what I prevented from being done. In that situation of the public mind, I did not undertake, as was then proposed, to new-model the House of Commons or the House of Lords; or to change the authority under which any officer of the crown acted, who was suffered at all to exist. Crown, lords, commons, judicial system, system of administration, existed as they had existed before; and in the mode and manner in which they had always existed. My measures were, what I then truly stated them to the House to be, in their intent, healing and mediatorial. A complaint was made of too much influence in the House of Commons; I reduced it in both houses; and I gave my reasons article by article for every reduction, and showed why I thought it safe for the service of the state. I heaved the lead every inch of way I made. A disposition to expense was complained of; to that I opposed, not mere retrenchment, but a system of economy, which would make a random expense without plan or foresight, in future, not easily practicable. I proceeded upon principles of research to put me in possession of my matter; on principles of method to regulate it; and on principles in the human mind and in civil affairs to secure and perpetuate the operation. I conceived nothing arbitrarily; nor proposed anything to be done by the will and pleasure of others, or my own; but by reason, and by reason only. I have ever abhorred, since the first dawn of my understanding to this its obscure twilight, all the operations of opinion, fancy, inclination, and will, in the affairs of government, where only a sovereign reason, paramount to all forms of legislation and administration, should dictate.

Government is made for the very purpose of opposing that reason to will and caprice, in the reformers or in the reformed, in the governors or in the governed, in kings, in senates, or in people.

On a careful review, therefore, and analysis, of all the component parts of the civil list, and on weighing them against each other, in order to make, as much as possible, all of them a subject of estimate (the foundation and corner-stone of all regular provident economy), it appeared to me evident, that this was impracticable, whilst that part, called the pension list, was totally discretionary in its amount. For this reason, and for this only, I proposed to reduce it, both in its gross quantity, and in its larger individual proportions, to a certainty; lest, if it were left without a *general* limit, it might eat up the civil list service; if suffered to be granted in portions too great for the fund, it might defeat its own end; and, by unlimited allowances to some, it might disable the crown in means of providing for others. The pension list was to be kept as a sacred fund; but it could not be kept as a constant, open fund, sufficient for growing demands, if some demands would wholly devour it. The tenor of the act will show that it regarded the civil list *only*, the reduction of which to some sort of estimate was my great object.

No other of the crown funds did I meddle with, because they had not the same relations. This of the four and a half per cents., does his grace imagine had escaped me, or had escaped all the men of business, who acted with me in those regulations? I knew that such a fund existed, and that pensions had been always granted on it, before his grace was born. This fund was full in my eye. It was full in the eyes of those who worked with me. It was left on principle. On principle I did what was then done; and on principle what was left undone was omitted. I did not dare to rob the nation of all funds to reward merit. If I pressed this point too close, I acted contrary to the avowed principles on which I went. Gentlemen are very fond

of quoting me; but if any one thinks it worth his while to know the rules that guided me in my plan of reform, he will read my printed speech on that subject; at least what is contained from page 230 to page 241 in the second volume of the collection which a friend has given himself the trouble to make of my publications.[1] Be this as it may, these two bills (though achieved with the greatest labour, and management of every sort, both within and without the House) were only a part, and but a small part, of a very large system, comprehending all the objects I stated in opening my proposition, and, indeed, many more, which I just hinted at in my speech to the electors of Bristol, when I was put out of that representation. All these, in some state or other of forwardness, I have long had by me.

But do I justify his majesty's grace on these grounds? I think them the least of my services! The time gave them an occasional value. What I have done in the way of political economy was far from confined to this body of measures. I did not come into parliament to con my lesson. I had earned my pension before I set my foot in St. Stephen's chapel. I was prepared and disciplined to this political warfare. The first session I sat in parliament, I found it necessary to analyse the whole commercial, financial, constitutional, and foreign interests of Great Britain and its empire. A great deal was then done; and more, far more, would have been done, if more had been permitted by events. Then, in the vigour of my manhood, my constitution sank under my labour. Had I then died (and I seemed to myself very near death), I had then earned for those who belonged to me, more than the Duke of Bedford's ideas of service are of power to estimate. But, in truth, these services I am called to account for are not those on which I value myself the most. If I were to call for a reward (which I have never done), it should be for those in which for fourteen years, without intermission, I showed the most industry, and had the least

[1] See vol. ii of this edition: Speech on Economical Reform.

success: I mean in the affairs of India. They are those on which I value myself the most; most for the importance; most for the labour; most for the judgement; most for constancy and perseverance in the pursuit. Others may value them most for the *intention*. In that, surely, they are not mistaken.

Does his grace think that they, who advised the crown to make my retreat easy, considered me only as an economist? That, well understood, however, is a good deal. If I had not deemed it of some value, I should not have made political economy an object of my humble studies, from my very early youth to near the end of my service in parliament, even before (at least to any knowledge of mine) it had employed the thoughts of speculative men in other parts of Europe. At that time it was still in its infancy in England, where, in the last century, it had its origin. Great and learned men thought my studies were not wholly thrown away, and deigned to communicate with me now and then on some particulars of their immortal works. Something of these studies may appear incidentally in some of the earliest things I published. The House has been witness to their effect, and has profited of them, more or less, for above eight-and-twenty years.

To their estimate I leave the matter. I was not, like his grace of Bedford, swaddled, and rocked, and dandled into a legislator; '*Nitor in adversum*' is the motto for a man like me. I possessed not one of the qualities, nor cultivated one of the arts that recommend men to the favour and protection of the great. I was not made for a minion or a tool. As little did I follow the trade of winning the hearts, by imposing on the understandings, of the people. At every step of my progress in life (for in every step was I traversed and opposed), and at every turnpike I met, I was obliged to show my passport, and again and again to prove my sole title to the honour of being useful to my country, by a proof that I was not wholly unacquainted with its laws, and the whole system of its interests both abroad and at home. Otherwise no

rank, no toleration even, for me. I had no arts but manly arts. On them I have stood, and, please God, in spite of the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale, to the last gasp will I stand.

Had his grace condescended to inquire concerning the person, whom he has not thought it below him to reproach, he might have found that, in the whole course of my life, I have never, on any pretence of economy, or on any other pretence, so much as in a single instance, stood between any man and his reward of service, or his encouragement in useful talent and pursuit, from the highest of those services and pursuits to the lowest. On the contrary I have, on a hundred occasions, exerted myself with singular zeal to forward every man's even tolerable pretensions. I have more than once had good-natured reprehensions from my friends for carrying the matter to something bordering on abuse. This line of conduct, whatever its merits might be, was partly owing to natural disposition; but I think full as much to reason and principle. I looked on the consideration of public service, or public ornament, to be real and very justice: and I ever held a scanty and penurious justice to partake of the nature of a wrong. I held it to be, in its consequences, the worst economy in the world. In saving money, I soon can count up all the good I do; but when, by a cold penury, I blast the abilities of a nation, and stunt the growth of its active energies, the ill I may do is beyond all calculation. Whether it be too much or too little, whatever I have done has been general and systematic. I have never entered into those trifling vexations, and oppressive details, that have been falsely, and most ridiculously, laid to my charge.

Did I blame the pensions given to Mr. Barré and Mr. Dunning between the proposition and execution of my plan? No! surely no! Those pensions were within my principles. I assert it, those gentlemen deserved their pensions, their titles—all they had; and more had they had, I should have been but pleased the more. They were men of talents; they were men of service. I put the profession of the law out of the

question in one of them. It is a service that rewards itself. But their *public service*, though, from their abilities unquestionably of more value than mine, in its quantity and in its duration, was not to be mentioned with it. But I never could drive a hard bargain in my life, concerning any matter whatever; and least of all do I know how to haggle and huckster with merit. Pension for myself I obtained none; nor did I solicit any. Yet I was loaded with hatred for everything that was withheld, and with obloquy for everything that was given. I was thus left to support the grants of a name ever dear to me, and ever venerable to the world, in favour of those, who were no friends of mine or of his, against the rude attacks of those who were at that time friends to the grantees, and their own zealous partisans. I have never heard the Earl of Lauderdale complain of these pensions. He finds nothing wrong till he comes to me. This is impartiality, in the true, modern, revolutionary style.

Whatever I did at that time, so far as it regarded order and economy, is stable and eternal; as all principles must be. A particular order of things may be altered; order itself cannot lose its value. As to other particulars, they are variable by time and by circumstances. Laws of regulation are not fundamental laws. The public exigencies are the masters of all such laws. They rule the laws, and are not to be ruled by them. They who exercise the legislative power at the time must judge.

It may be new to his grace, but I beg leave to tell him, that mere parsimony is not economy. It is separable in theory from it; and in fact it may, or it may not, be a *part* of economy, according to circumstances. Expense, and great expense, may be an essential part in true economy. If parsimony were to be considered as one of the kinds of that virtue, there is, however, another and a higher economy. Economy is a distributive virtue, and consists not in saving, but in selection. Parsimony requires no providence, no sagacity, no powers of combination, no comparison, no judgement.

Mere instinct, and that not an instinct of the noblest kind, may produce this false economy in perfection. The other economy has larger views. It demands a discriminating judgement, and a firm, sagacious mind. It shuts one door to impudent importunity, only to open another, and a wider, to unpresuming merit. If none but meritorious service or real talent were to be rewarded, this nation has not wanted, and this nation will not want, the means of rewarding all the service it ever will receive, and encouraging all the merit it ever will produce. No state, since the foundation of society, has been impoverished by that species of profusion. Had the economy of selection and proportion been at all times observed, we should not now have had an overgrown Duke of Bedford, to oppress the industry of humble men, and to limit, by the standard of his own conceptions, the justice, the bounty, or, if he pleases, the charity of the crown.

His grace may think as meanly as he will of my deserts in the far greater part of my conduct in life. It is free for him to do so. There will always be some difference of opinion in the value of political services. But there is one merit of mine which he, of all men living, ought to be the last to call in question. I have supported with very great zeal, and I am told with some degree of success, those opinions, or if his grace likes another expression better, those old prejudices, which buoy up the ponderous mass of his nobility, wealth, and titles. I have omitted no exertion to prevent him and them from sinking to that level, to which the meretricious French faction his grace at least coquets with, omit no exertion to reduce both. I have done all I could to discountenance their inquiries into the fortunes of those, who hold large portions of wealth without any apparent merit of their own. I have strained every nerve to keep the Duke of Bedford in that situation, which alone makes him my superior. Your lordship has been a witness of the use he makes of that pre-eminence.

But be it, that this is virtue! Be it, that there is virtue in this well-selected rigour; yet all virtues are

not equally becoming to all men and at all times. There are crimes, undoubtedly there are crimes, which in all seasons of our existence, ought to put a generous antipathy in action; crimes that provoke an indignant justice, and call forth a warm and animated pursuit. But all things, that concern, what I may call, the preventive police of morality, all things merely rigid, harsh, and censorial, the antiquated moralists, at whose fect I was brought up, would not have thought these the fittest matter to form the favourite virtues of young men of rank. What might have been well enough, and have been received with a veneration mixed with awe and terror, from an old, severe, crabbed Cato, would have wanted something of propriety in the young Scipios, the ornament of the Roman nobility, in the flower of their life. But the times, the morals, the masters, the scholars, have all undergone a thorough revolution. It is a vile, illiberal school, this new French academy of the *sans-culottes*. There is nothing in it that is fit for a gentleman to learn.

Whatever its vogue may be, I still flatter myself that the parents of the growing generation will be satisfied with what is to be taught to their children in Westminster, in Eton, or in Winchester: I still indulge the hope that no *grown* gentleman or nobleman of our time will think of finishing at Mr. Thelwall's lecture whatever may have been left incomplete at the old universities of his country. I would give to Lord Grenville and Mr. Pitt for a motto, what was said of a Roman censor or praetor (or what was he?) who, in virtue of a Senatus consultum, shut up certain academies,

'Cludere ludum impudentiae jussit.'

Every honest father of a family in the kingdom will rejoice at the breaking up for the holidays, and will pray that there may be a very long vacation in all such schools.

The awful state of the time, and not myself, or my own justification, is my true object in what I now write; or in what I shall ever write or say. It little signifies

to the world what becomes of such things as me, or even as the Duke of Bedford. What I say about either of us is nothing more than a vehicle, as you, my lord, will easily perceive, to convey my sentiments on matters far more worthy of your attention. It is when I stick to my apparent first subject that I ought to apologize, not when I depart from it. I therefore must beg your lordship's pardon for again resuming it after this very short digression; assuring you that I shall never altogether lose sight of such matter as persons abler than I am may turn to some profit.

The Duke of Bedford conceives that he is obliged to call the attention of the House of Peers to his majesty's grant to me, which he considers as excessive and out of all bounds.

I know not how it has happened, but it really seems that, whilst his grace was meditating his well-considered censure upon me, he fell into a sort of sleep. Homer nods; and the Duke of Bedford may dream; and as dreams (even in his golden dreams) are apt to be ill-pieced, and incongruously put together, his grace preserved his idea of reproach to *me*, but took the subject-matter from the crown grants to *his own family*. This is 'the stuff of which his dreams are made.' In that way of putting things together his grace is perfectly in the right. The grants to the house of Russell were so enormous, as not only to outrage economy, but even to stagger credibility. The Duke of Bedford is the leviathan among all the creatures of the crown. He tumbles about his unwieldy bulk; he plays and frolics in the ocean of the royal bounty. Huge as he is, and whilst 'he lies floating many a rood,' he is still a creature. His ribs, his fins, his whalebone, his blubber, the very spiracles through which he spouts a torrent of brine against his origin, and covers me all over with the spray,—everything of him and about him is the throne. Is it for *him* to question the dispensation of the royal favour?

I really am at a loss to draw any sort of parallel between the public merits of his grace, by which he

justifies the grants he holds; and these services of mine, on the favourable construction of which I have obtained what his grace so much disapproves. In private life, I have not at all the honour of acquaintance with the noble duke. But I ought to presume, and it costs me nothing to do so, that he abundantly deserves the esteem and love of all who live with him. But as to public service, why truly it would not be more ridiculous for me to compare myself in rank, in fortune, in splendid descent, in youth, strength, or figure, with the Duke of Bedford, than to make a parallel between his services, and my attempts to be useful to my country. It would not be gross adulation, but uncivil irony, to say that he has any public merit of his own to keep alive the idea of the services by which his vast landed pensions were obtained. My merits, whatever they are, are original and personal; his are derivative. It is his ancestor, the original pensioner, that has laid up this inexhaustible fund of merit, which makes his grace so very delicate and exceptious about the merit of all other grantees of the crown. Had he permitted me to remain in quiet, I should have said, 'tis his estate; that's enough. It is his by law; what have I to do with it or its history? He would naturally have said on his side, 'tis this man's fortune.—He is as good now as my ancestor was two hundred and fifty years ago. I am a young man with very old pensions; he is an old man with very young pensions,—that's all.

Why will his grace, by attacking me, force me reluctantly to compare my little merit with that which obtained from the crown those prodigies of profuse donation, by which he tramples on the mediocrity of humble and laborious individuals? I would willingly leave him to the herald's college, which the philosophy of the *sans-culottes* (prouder by far than all the Garters, and Norroys, and Clarencieux, and Rouge Dragons, that ever pranced in a procession of what his friends call aristocrats and despots) will abolish with contumely and scorn. These historians, recorders, and blazoners of virtues and arms, differ wholly from that

other description of historians, who never assign any act of politicians to a good motive. These gentle historians, on the contrary, dip their pens in nothing but the milk of human kindness. They seek no further for merit than the preamble of a patent, or the inscription of a tomb. With them every man created a peer is first a hero ready made. They judge of every man's capacity for office by the offices he has filled; and the more offices the more ability. Every general officer with them is a Marlborough; every statesman a Burleigh; every judge a Murray or a Yorke. They who, alive, were laughed at or pitied by all their acquaintance, make as good a figure as the best of them in the pages of Guillim, Edmondson, and Collins.

To these recorders, so full of good nature to the great and prosperous, I would willingly leave the first Baron Russell, and Earl of Bedford, and the merits of his grants. But the alnager, the weigher, the meter of grants, will not suffer us to acquiesce in the judgement of the prince reigning at the time when they were made. They are never good to those who earn them. Well then; since the new grantees have war made on them by the old, and that the word of the sovereign is not to be taken, let us turn our eyes to history, in which great men have always a pleasure in contemplating the heroic origin of their house.

The first peer of the name, the first purchaser of the grants, was a Mr. Russell, a person of an ancient gentleman's family, raised by being a minion of Henry VIII. As there generally is some resemblance of character to create these relations, the favourite was in all likelihood much such another as his master. The first of those immoderate grants was not taken from the ancient demesne of the crown, but from the recent confiscation of the ancient nobility of the land. The lion having sucked the blood of his prey, threw the offal carcass to the jackal in waiting. Having tasted once the food of confiscation, the favourites became fierce and ravenous. This worthy favourite's first grant was from the lay nobility. The second, infinitely

improving on the enormity of the first, was from the plunder of the church. In truth his grace is somewhat excusable for his dislike to a grant like mine, not only in its quantity, but in its kind so different from his own.

Mine was from a mild and benevolent sovereign; his from Henry VIII.

Mine had not its fund in the murder of any innocent person of illustrious rank,[1] or in the pillage of any body of unoffending men. His grants were from the aggregate and consolidated funds of judgements iniquitously legal, and from possessions voluntarily surrendered by the lawful proprietors, with the gibbet at their door.

The merit of the grantee whom he derives from was that of being a prompt and greedy instrument of a *levelling* tyrant, who oppressed all descriptions of his people, but who fell with particular fury on everything that was *great and noble.* Mine has been, in endeavouring to screen every man, in every class, from oppression, and particularly in defending the high and eminent, who in the bad times of confiscating princes, confiscating chief governors, or confiscating demagogues are the most exposed to jealousy, avarice, and envy.

The merit of the original grantee of his grace's pensions was in giving his hand to the work, and partaking the spoil with a prince, who plundered a part of the national church of his time and country. Mine was in defending the whole of the national church of my own time and my own country, and the whole of the national churches of all countries, from the principles and the examples which lead to ecclesiastical pillage, thence to a contempt of *all* prescriptive titles, thence to the pillage of *all* property, and thence to universal desolation.

The merit of the origin of his grace's fortune was in being a favourite and chief adviser to a prince, who left no liberty to their native country. My endeavour was to obtain liberty for the municipal country in which I was born, and for all descriptions and denominations

[1] See the history of the melancholy catastrophe of the Duke of Buckingham. Temp. Hen. VIII.

in it. Mine was to support with unrelaxing vigilance every right, every privilege, every franchise, in this my adopted, my dearer, and more comprehensive country: and not only to preserve those rights in this chief seat of empire, but in every nation, in every land, in every climate, language, and religion, in the vast domain that is still under the protection, and the larger that was once under the protection, of the British crown.

His founder's merits were, by arts in which he served his master and made his fortune, to bring poverty, wretchedness, and depopulation on his country. Mine were under a benevolent prince, in promoting the commerce, manufactures, and agriculture of his kingdom; in which his majesty shows an eminent example, who even in his amusements is a patriot, and in hours of leisure an improver of his native soil.

His founder's merit was the merit of a gentleman raised by the arts of a court, and the protection of a Wolsey, to the eminence of a great and potent lord. His merit in that eminence was by instigating a tyrant to injustice, to provoke a people to rebellion. My merit was, to awaken the sober part of the country, that they might put themselves on their guard against any one potent lord, or any greater number of potent lords, or any combination of great leading men of any sort, if ever they should attempt to proceed in the same courses, but in the reverse order; that is, by instigating a corrupted populace to rebellion, and, through that rebellion, introducing a tyranny yet worse than the tyranny which his grace's ancestor supported, and of which he profited in the manner we behold in the despotism of Henry VIII.

The political merit of the first pensioner of his grace's house was that of being concerned as a counsellor of state in advising, and in his person executing, the conditions of a dishonourable peace with France; the surrendering the fortress of Boulogne, then our outguard on the Continent. By that surrender, Calais, the key of France, and the bridle in the mouth of that power, was, not many years afterwards, finally lost.

My merit has been in resisting the power and pride of France, under any form of its rule: but in opposing it with the greatest zeal and earnestness, when that rule appeared in the worst form it could assume; the worst indeed which the prime cause and principle of all evil could possibly give it. It was my endeavour by every means to excite a spirit in the House, where I had the honour of a seat, for carrying on, with early vigour and decision, the most clearly just and necessary war, that this or any nation ever carried on; in order to save my country from the iron yoke of its power and from the more dreadful contagion of its principles; to preserve, while they can be preserved, pure and untainted, the ancient, inbred integrity, piety, good nature, and good humour of the people of England, from the dreadful pestilence, which, beginning in France, threatens to lay waste the whole moral and in a great degree the whole physical world, having done both in the focus of its most intense malignity.

The labour of his grace's founder merited the curses, not loud but deep, of the commons of England, on whom *he* and his master had effected a *complete parliamentary reform*, by making them, in their slavery and humiliation, the true and adequate representatives of a debased, degraded, and undone people. My merits were, in having had an active, though not always an ostentatious share, in every one act, without exception, of undisputed constitutional utility in my time, and in having supported, on all occasions, the authority, the efficiency, and the privileges of the commons of Great Britain. I ended my services by a recorded and fully-reasoned assertion on their own journals of their constitutional rights, and a vindication of their constitutional conduct. I laboured in all things to merit their inward approbation, and (along with the assistance of the largest, the greatest, and best of my endeavours) I received their free, unbiassed, public, and solemn thanks.

Thus stands the account of the comparative merits of the crown grants which compose the Duke of Bedford's

fortune as balanced against mine. In the name of common sense, why should the Duke of Bedford think that none but of the house of Russell are entitled to the favour of the crown? Why should he imagine that no king of England has been capable of judging of merit but King Henry VIII? Indeed, he will pardon me; he is a little mistaken; all virtue did not end in the first Earl of Bedford. All discernment did not lose its vision when his creator closed his eyes. Let him remit his rigour on the disproportion between merit and reward in others, and they will make no inquiry into the origin of his fortune. They will regard with much more satisfaction, as he will contemplate with infinitely more advantage, whatever in his pedigree has been dulcified by an exposure to the influence of heaven in a long flow of generations, from the hard, acidulous, metallic tincture of the spring. It is little to be doubted that several of his forefathers in that long series have degenerated into honour and virtue. Let the Duke of Bedford (I am sure he will) reject with scorn, and horror, the counsels of the lecturers, those wicked panders to avarice and ambition, who would tempt him, in the troubles of his country, to seek another enormous fortune from the forfeitures of another nobility, and the plunder of another church. Let him (and I trust that yet he will) employ all the energy of his youth, and all the resources of his wealth, to crush rebellious principles which have no foundation in morals, and rebellious movements that have no provocation in tyranny.

Then will be forgot the rebellions which, by a doubtful priority in crime, his ancestor had provoked and extinguished. On such a conduct in the noble duke, many of his countrymen might, and with some excuse might, give way to the enthusiasm of their gratitude, and, in the dashing style of some of the old declaimers, cry out, that if the fates had found no other way in which they could give a[1] Duke of Bedford and his opulence

[1] At si non aliam venturo fata Neroni, &c.

as props to a tottering world, then the butchery of the Duke of Buckingham might be tolerated; it might be regarded even with complacency, whilst in the heir of confiscation they saw the sympathizing comforter of the martyrs, who suffer under the cruel confiscation of this day; whilst they behold with admiration his zealous protection of the virtuous and loyal nobility of France, and his manly support of his brethren, the yet standing nobility and gentry of his native land, then his grace's merit would be pure, and new, and sharp, as fresh from the mint of honour. As he pleased he might reflect honour on his predecessors, or throw it forward on those who were to succeed him. He might be the propagator of the stock of honour, or the root of it, as he thought proper.

Had it pleased God to continue to me the hopes of succession, I should have been, according to my mediocrity and the mediocrity of the age I live in, a sort of founder of a family: I should have left a son, who, in all the points in which personal merit can be viewed, in science, in erudition, in genius, in taste, in honour, in generosity, in humanity, in every liberal sentiment, and every liberal accomplishment, would not have shown himself inferior to the Duke of Bedford, or to any of those whom he traces in his line. His grace very soon would have wanted all plausibility in his attack upon that provision which belonged more to mine than to me. HE would soon have supplied every deficiency, and symmetrized every disproportion. It would not have been for that successor to resort to any stagnant wasting reservoir of merit in me, or in any ancestry. He had in himself a salient, living spring of generous and manly action. Every day he lived he would have re-purchased the bounty of the crown, and ten times more, if ten times more he had received. He was made a public creature; and had no enjoyment whatever but in the performance of some duty. At this exigent moment, the loss of a finished man is not easily supplied.

But a Disposer whose power we are little able to

resist and whose wisdom it behoves us not at all to dispute, has ordained it in another manner, and (whatever my querulous weakness might suggest) a far better. The storm has gone over me; and I lie like one of those old oaks which the late hurricane has scattered about me. I am stripped of all my honours, I am torn up by the roots, and lie prostrate on the earth! There, and prostrate there, I most unfeignedly recognize the Divine justice, and in some degree submit to it. But whilst I humble myself before God, I do not know that it is forbidden to repel the attacks of unjust and inconsiderate men. The patience of Job is proverbial. After some of the convulsive struggles of our irritable nature, he submitted himself, and repented in dust and ashes. But even so, I do not find him blamed for reprehending, and with a considerable degree of verbal asperity, those ill-natured neighbours of his, who visited his dunghill to read moral, political, and economical lectures on his misery. I am alone. I have none to meet my enemies in the gate. Indeed, my lord, I greatly deceive myself, if in this hard season I would give a peck of refuse wheat for all that is called fame and honour in the world. This is the appetite but of a few. It is a luxury, it is a privilege, it is an indulgence for those who are at their ease. But we are all of us made to shun disgrace, as we are made to shrink from pain, and poverty, and disease. It is an instinct; and under the direction of reason, instinct is always in the right. I live in an inverted order. They who ought to have succeeded me have gone before me. They who should have been to me as posterity are in the place of ancestors. I owe to the dearest relation (which ever must subsist in memory) that act of piety, which he would have performed to me; I owe it to him to show that he was not descended, as the Duke of Bedford would have it, from an unworthy parent.

The crown has considered me after long service: the crown has paid the Duke of Bedford by advance. He has had a long credit for any service which he may

perform hereafter. He is secure, and long may he be secure, in his advance, whether he performs any services or not. But let him take care how he endangers the safety of that constitution which secures his own utility or his own insignificance ; or how he discourages those, who take up even puny arms to defend an order of things, which, like the sun of heaven, shines alike on the useful and the worthless. His grants are engrafted on the public law of Europe, covered with the awful hoar of innumerable ages. They are guarded by the sacred rules of prescription, found in that full treasury of jurisprudence from which the jejuneness and penury of our municipal law has, by degrees, been enriched and strengthened. This prescription I had my share (a very full share) in bringing to its perfection.[1] The Duke of Bedford will stand as long as prescriptive law endures : as long as the great, stable laws of property, common to us with all civilized nations, are kept in their integrity, and without the smallest intermixture of laws, maxims, principles, or precedents of the grand revolution. They are secure against all changes but one. The whole revolutionary system, institutes, digest, code, novels, text, gloss, comment, are, not only not the same, but they are the very reverse, and the reverse fundamentally, of all the laws, on which civil life has hitherto been upheld in all the governments of the world. The learned professors of the rights of man regard prescription, not as a title to bar all claim, set up against all possession—but they look on prescription as itself a bar against the possessor and proprietor. They hold an immemorial possession to be no more than a long continued, and therefore an aggravated injustice.

Such are *their* ideas ; such *their* religion, and such *their* law. But as to *our* country and *our* race, as long as the well-compacted structure of our church and state, the sanctuary, the holy of holies of that ancient law, defended by reverence, defended by power, a

[1] Sir George Savile's Act called The *Nullum Tempus* Act.

fortress at once and a temple,[1] shall stand inviolate on the brow of the British Sion—as long as the British monarchy, not more limited than fenced by the orders of the state, shall, like the proud Keep of Windsor, rising in the majesty of proportion, and girt with the double belt of its kindred and coeval towers, as long as this awful structure shall oversee and guard the subject land—so long the mounds and dykes of the low, fat, Bedford level will have nothing to fear from all the pickaxes of all the levellers of France. As long as our sovereign lord the king, and his faithful subjects, the lords and commons of this realm,—the triple cord, which no man can break; the solemn, sworn, constitutional frank-pledge of this nation; the firm guarantees of each others' being, and each others' rights; the joint and several securities, each in its place and order, for every kind and every quality, of property and of dignity:—as long as these endure, so long the Duke of Bedford is safe: and we are all safe together—the high from the blights of envy and the spoliations of rapacity; the low from the iron hand of oppression and the insolent spurn of contempt. Amen! and so be it: and so it will be,

> Dum domus Aeneae Capitoli immobile saxum
> Accolet; imperiumque pater Romanus habebit.

But if the rude inroad of Gallic tumult, with its sophistical rights of man to falsify the account, and its sword as a makeweight to throw into the scale, shall be introduced into our city by a misguided populace, set on by proud great men, themselves blinded and intoxicated by a frantic ambition, we shall, all of us, perish and be overwhelmed in a common ruin. If a great storm blow on our coast, it will cast the whales on the strand as well as the periwinkles. His grace will not survive the poor grantee he despises, no, not for a twelvemonth. If the great look for safety in

[1] *Templum in modum arcis.* Tacitus, of the temple of Jerusalem.

the services they render to this Gallic cause, it is to be foolish, even above the weight of privilege allowed to wealth. If his grace be one of these whom they endeavour to proselytize, he ought to be aware of the character of the sect whose doctrines he is invited to embrace. With them insurrection is the most sacred of revolutionary duties to the state. Ingratitude to benefactors is the first of revolutionary virtues. Ingratitude is indeed their four cardinal virtues compacted and amalgamated into one; and he will find it in everything that has happened since the commencement of the philosophic revolution to this hour. If he pleads the merit of having performed the duty of insurrection against the order he lives (God forbid he ever should), the merit of others will be to perform the duty of insurrection against him. If he pleads (again God forbid he should, and I do not suspect he will) his ingratitude to the crown for its creation of his family, others will plead their right and duty to pay him in kind. They will laugh, indeed they will laugh, at his parchment and his wax. His deeds will be drawn out with the rest of the number of his evidence room, and burnt to the tune of *ça ira* in the courts of Bedford (then Equality) House.

Am I to blame, if I attempt to pay his grace's hostile reproaches to me with a friendly admonition to himself? Can I be blamed for pointing out to him in what manner he is likely to be affected, if the sect of the cannibal philosophers of France should proselytize any considerable part of this people, and, by their joint proselytizing arms, should conquer that government to which his grace does not seem to me to give all the support his own security demands? Surely it is proper that he, and that others like him, should know the true genius of this sect; what their opinions are, what they have done; and to whom; and what (if a prognostic is to be formed from the dispositions and actions of men) it is certain they will do hereafter. He ought to know that they have sworn assistance, the only engagements they ever will keep, to all in this country, who

bear a resemblance to themselves, and who think as such, that *the whole duty of man* consists in destruction. They are a misallied and disparaged branch of the house of Nimrod. They are the Duke of Bedford's natural hunters; and he is their natural game. Because he is not very profoundly reflecting, he sleeps in profound security: they, on the contrary, are always vigilant, active, enterprising, and, though far removed from any knowledge which makes men estimable or useful, in all the instruments and resources of evil, their leaders are not meanly instructed, or insufficiently furnished. In the French revolution everything is new; and, from want of preparation to meet so unlooked-for an evil, everything is dangerous. Never, before this time, was a set of literary men converted into a gang of robbers and assassins. Never before, did a den of bravos and banditti assume the garb and tone of an academy of philosophers.

Let me tell his grace that an union of such characters, monstrous as it seems, is not made for producing despicable enemies. But if they are formidable as foes, as friends they are dreadful indeed. The men of property in France confiding in a force, which seemed to be irresistible, because it had never been tried, neglected to prepare for a conflict with their enemies at their own weapons. They were found in such a situation as the Mexicans were, when they were attacked by the dogs, the cavalry, the iron, and the gunpowder, of a handful of bearded men, whom they did not know to exist in nature. This is a comparison that some, I think, have made; and it is just. In France they had their enemies within their houses. They were even in the bosoms of many of them. But they had not sagacity to discern their savage character. They seemed tame, and even caressing. They had nothing but *douce humanité* in their mouth. They could not bear the punishment of the mildest laws on the greatest criminals. The slightest severity of justice made their flesh creep. The very idea that war existed in the world disturbed their repose. Military glory was no

more, with them, than a splendid infamy. Hardly would they hear of self-defence, which they reduced within such bounds, as to leave it no defence at all. All this while they meditated the confiscations and massacres we have seen. Had any one told these unfortunate noblemen and gentlemen, how, and by whom, the grand fabric of the French monarchy under which they flourished would be subverted, they would not have pitied him as a visionary, but would have turned from him as what they call a *mauvais plaisant*. Yet we have seen what has happened. The persons who have suffered from the cannibal philosophy of France are so like the Duke of Bedford, that nothing but his grace's probably not speaking quite so good French could enable us to find out any difference. A great many of them had as pompous titles as he, and were of full as illustrious a race: some few of them had fortunes as ample; several of them, without meaning the least disparagement to the Duke of Bedford, were as wise, and as virtuous, and as valiant, and as well educated, and as complete in all the lineaments of men of honour, as he is: and to all this they had added the powerful outguard of a military profession, which, in its nature, renders men somewhat more cautious than those who have nothing to attend to but the lazy enjoyment of undisturbed possessions. But security was their ruin. They are dashed to pieces in the storm, and our shores are covered with the wrecks. If they had been aware that such a thing might happen, such a thing never could have happened.

I assure his grace that, if I state to him the designs of his enemies, in a manner which may appear to him ludicrous and impossible, I tell him nothing that has not exactly happened, point by point, but twenty-four miles from our own shore. I assure him that the Frenchified faction, more encouraged than others are warned by what has happened in France, look at him and his landed possessions as an object at once of curiosity and rapacity. He is made for them in every part of their double character. As robbers, to them

he is a noble booty: as speculatists, he is a glorious subject for their experimental philosophy. He affords matter for an extensive analysis, in all the branches of their science, geometrical, physical, civil, and political. These philosophers are fanatics; independent of any interest, which if it operated alone would make them much more tractable, they are carried with such a headlong rage towards every desperate trial, that they would sacrifice the whole human race to the slightest of their experiments. I am better able to enter into the character of this description of men than the noble duke can be. I have lived long and variously in the world. Without any considerable pretensions to literature in myself, I have aspired to the love of letters. I have lived for a great many years in habitudes with those who professed them. I can form a tolerable estimate of what is likely to happen from a character chiefly dependent for fame and fortune on knowledge and talent, as well in its morbid and perverted state, as in that which is sound and natural. Naturally men so formed and finished are the first gifts of Providence to the world. But when they have once thrown off the fear of God, which was in all ages too often the case, and the fear of men, which is now the case, and when in that state they come to understand one another, and to act in corps, a more dreadful calamity cannot arise out of hell to scourge mankind. Nothing can be conceived more hard than the heart of a thoroughbred metaphysician. It comes nearer to the cold malignity of a wicked spirit than to the frailty and passion of a man. It is like that of the principle of evil himself, incorporeal, pure, unmixed, dephlegmated, defecated evil. It is no easy operation to eradicate humanity from the human breast. What Shakespeare calls 'the compunctious visitings of nature' will sometimes knock at their hearts, and protest against their murderous speculations. But they have a means of compounding with their nature. Their humanity is not dissolved. They only give it a long prorogation. They are ready to declare that they do not think two

thousand years too long a period for the good that they pursue. It is remarkable that they never see any way to their projected good but by the road of some evil. Their imagination is not fatigued with the contemplation of human suffering through the wild waste of centuries added to centuries of misery and desolation. Their humanity is at their horizon—and, like the horizon, it always flies before them. The geometricians and the chemists bring, the one from the dry bones of their diagrams, and the other from the soot of their furnaces, dispositions that make them worse than indifferent about those feelings and habitudes which are the supports of the moral world. Ambition is come upon them suddenly; they are intoxicated with it, and it has rendered them fearless of the danger which may from thence arise to others or to themselves. These philosophers consider men in their experiments no more than they do mice in an air-pump, or in a recipient of mephitic gas. Whatever his grace may think of himself, they look upon him, and everything that belongs to him, with no more regard than they do upon the whiskers of that little long-tailed animal, that has been long the game of the grave, demure, insidious, spring-nailed, velvet-pawed, green-eyed philosophers, whether going upon two legs, or upon four.

His grace's landed possessions are irresistibly inviting to an *agrarian* experiment. They are a downright insult upon the rights of man. They are more extensive than the territory of many of the Grecian republics; and they are without comparison more fertile than most of them. There are now republics in Italy, in Germany, and in Switzerland, which do not possess anything like so fair and ample a domain. There is a scope for seven philosophers to proceed in their analytical experiments, upon Harrington's seven different forms of republics, in the acres of this one duke. Hitherto they have been wholly unproductive to speculation; fitted for nothing but to fatten bullocks, and to produce grain for beer, still more to stupify the dull English understanding. Abbé Sieyes has whole nests of pigeon-

holes full of constitutions ready made, ticketed, sorted, and numbered; suited to every season and every fancy; some with the top of the pattern at the bottom, and some with the bottom at the top; some plain, some flowered; some distinguished for their simplicity, others for their complexity; some of blood colour; some of *boue de Paris*; some with directories, others without a direction; some with councils of elders, and councils of youngsters; some without any council at all. Some, where the electors choose the representatives; others, where the representatives choose the electors. Some in long coats, and some in short cloaks; some with pantaloons; some without breeches. Some with five-shilling qualifications; some totally unqualified. So that no constitution-fancier may go unsuited from his shop, provided he loves a pattern of pillage, oppression, arbitrary imprisonment, confiscation, exile, revolutionary judgement, and legalized premeditated murder, in any shapes into which they can be put. What a pity it is, that the progress of experimental philosophy should be checked by his grace's monopoly! Such are their sentiments, I assure him; such is their language when they dare to speak; and such are their proceedings, when they have the means to act.

Their geographers and geometricians have been some time out of practice. It is some time since they have divided their own country into squares. That figure has lost the charms of its novelty. They want new lands for new trials. It is not only the geometricians of the republic that find him a good subject, the chemists have bespoken him after the geometricians have done with him. As the first set have an eye on his grace's lands, the chemists are not less taken with his buildings. They consider mortar as a very anti-revolutionary invention in its present state; but, properly employed, an admirable material for overturning all establishments. They have found that the gunpowder of *ruins* is far the fittest for making other *ruins*, and so *ad infinitum*. They have calculated what quantity of

matter convertible into nitre is to be found in Bedford House, in Woburn Abbey, and in what his grace and his trustees have still suffered to stand of that foolish royalist Inigo Jones, in Covent Garden. Churches, play-houses, coffee-houses, all alike are destined to be mingled, and equalized, and blended into one common rubbish; and well sifted, and lixiviated, to crystallize into true, democratic, explosive, insurrectionary nitre. Their academy del *Cimento*, (per antiphrasin,) with Morveau and Hassenfrats at its head, have computed that the brave *sans-culottes* may make war on all the aristocracy of Europe for a twelvemonth, out of the rubbish of the Duke of Bedford's buildings.[1]

While the Morveaux and Priestley's are proceeding with these experiments upon the Duke of Bedford's houses, the Sieyes, and the rest of the analytical legis-

[1] There is nothing, on which the leaders of the republic, one and indivisible, value themselves, more than on the chemical operations by which, through science, they convert the pride of aristocracy to an instrument of its own destruction—on the operation by which they reduce the magnificent, ancient, country seats of the nobility, decorated with the *feudal* titles of duke, marquis, or earl, into magazines of what they call *revolutionary* gunpowder. They tell us, that hitherto, things 'had not been properly and in a *revolutionary* manner explored.'—'The strong *chateaus*, those *feudal* fortresses, that *were ordered to be demolished*, attracted next the attention of your committee. *Nature* there had *secretly* regained her *rights*, and had produced saltpetre for the *purpose*, as it should seem, *of facilitating the execution of your decree by preparing means of destruction.* From these *ruins*, which *still frown* on the liberties of the republic, we have extracted the means of producing good; and those piles, which have hitherto glutted the *pride of despots*, and covered the plots of La Vendée, will soon furnish wherewithal to tame the traitors, and to overwhelm the disaffected.'—'The *rebellious cities*, also, have afforded a large quantity of saltpetre. *Commune Affranchie* (that is, the noble city of Lyons, reduced in many parts to a heap of ruins), and Toulon, will pay a *second* tribute to our artillery.' Report, February 1, 1794.

lators, and constitution-venders, are quite as busy in their trade of decomposing organization, in forming his grace's vassals into primary assemblies, national guards, first, second, and third requisitioners, committees of research, conductors of the travelling guillotine, judges of revolutionary tribunals, legislative hangmen, supervisors of domiciliary visitations, exactors of forced loans, and accessors of the maximum.

The din of all this smithery may some time or other possibly wake this noble duke, and push him to an endeavour to save some little matter from their experimental philosophy. If he pleads his grants from the crown, he is ruined at the outset. If he pleads he has received them from the pillage of superstitious corporations, this indeed will stagger them a little, because they are enemies to all corporations, and to all religion. However, they will soon recover themselves, and will tell his grace, or his learned council, that all such property belongs to the *nation*; and that it would be more wise for him, if he wishes to live the natural term of a *citizen* (that is, according to Condorcet's calculation, six months on an average), not to pass for an usurper upon the national property. This is what the *serjeants*-at-law of the rights of man will say to the puny *apprentices* of the common law of England.

Is the genius of philosophy not yet known? You may as well think the garden of the Tuilleries was well protected with the cords of ribbon insultingly stretched by the National Assembly to keep the sovereign canaille from intruding on the retirement of the poor King of the French, as that such flimsy cobwebs will stand between the savages of the revolution and their natural prey. Deep philosophers are no triflers; brave *sans-culottes* are no formalists. They will no more regard a Marquis of Tavistock than an Abbot of Tavistock; the Lord of Woburn will not be more respectable in their eyes than the Prior of Woburn; they will make no difference between the superior of a Covent Garden of nuns, and of a Covent Garden of

another description. They will not care a rush whether his coat is long or short; whether the colour be purple, or blue and buff. They will not trouble *their* heads, with what part of *his* head his hair is cut from; and will look with equal respect on a tonsure and a crop. Their only question will be that of their *Legendre*, or some other of their legislative butchers, how he cuts up? how he tallows in the caul, or on the kidneys?

Is it not a singular phenomenon, that whilst the *sans-culotte* carcase-butchers, and the philosophers of the shambles, are pricking their dotted lines upon his hide, and like the print of the poor ox that we see at the shop-windows at Charing-cross, alive as he is, and thinking no harm in the world, he is divided into rumps, and sirloins, and briskets, and into all sorts of pieces for roasting, boiling, and stewing, that all the while they are measuring *him*, his grace is measuring *me*; is invidiously comparing the bounty of the crown with the deserts of the defender of his order, and in the same moment fawning on those who have the knife half out of the sheath —poor innocent!

Pleased to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,
And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.

No man lives too long, who lives to do with spirit, and suffer with resignation, what Providence pleases to command, or inflict; but indeed they are sharp incommodities which beset old age. It was but the other day that, on putting in order some things which had been brought here on my taking leave of London for ever, I looked over a number of fine portraits, most of them of persons now dead, but whose society, in my better days, made this a proud and happy place. Amongst these was the picture of Lord Keppel. It was painted by an artist worthy of the subject, the excellent friend of that excellent man from their earliest youth, and a common friend of us both, with whom we lived for many years without a moment of coldness, of peevishness, of jealousy, or of jar, to the day of our final separation.

I ever looked on Lord Keppel as one of the greatest and best men of his age; and I loved and cultivated him accordingly. He was much in my heart and, I believe I was in his to the very last beat. It was at his trial at Portsmouth that he gave me this picture. With what zeal and anxious affection I attended him through that his agony of glory, what part my son took in the early flush and enthusiasm of his virtue, and the pious passion with which he attached himself to all my connexions, with what prodigality we both squandered ourselves in courting almost every sort of enmity for his sake, I believe he felt, just as I should have felt such friendship on such an occasion. I partook indeed of this honour, with several of the first, and best, and ablest in the kingdom, but I was behindhand with none of them; and I am sure that, if to the eternal disgrace of this nation, and to the total annihilation of every trace of honour and virtue in it, things had taken a different turn from what they did, I should have attended him to the quarter-deck with no less good will and more pride, though with far other feelings, than I partook of the general flow of national joy that attended the justice that was done to his virtue.

Pardon, my lord, the feeble garrulity of age, which loves to diffuse itself in discourse of the departed great. At my years we live in retrospect alone; and, wholly unfitted for the society of vigorous life, we enjoy, the best balm to all wounds, the consolation of friendship, in those only whom we have lost for ever. Feeling the loss of Lord Keppel at all times, at no time did I feel it so much as on the first day when I was attacked in the House of Lords.

Had he lived, that reverend form would have risen in its place, and, with a mild, parental reprehension to his nephew the Duke of Bedford, he would have told him that the favour of that gracious prince, who had honoured his virtues with the government of the navy of Great Britain, and with a seat in the hereditary great council of his kingdom, was not undeservedly shown to the friend of the best portion of his life, and

his faithful companion and counsellor under his rudest trials. He would have told him, that to whomever else these reproaches might be becoming, they were not decorous in his near kindred. He would have told him that when men in that rank lose decorum, they lose everything.

On that day I had a loss in Lord Keppel; but the public loss of him in this awful crisis— ! I speak from much knowledge of the person, he never would have listened to any compromise with the rabble rout of this *sans-culotterie* of France. His goodness of heart, his reason, his taste, his public duty, his principles, his prejudices, would have repelled him for ever from all connexion with that horrid medley of madness, vice, impiety, and crime.

Lord Keppel had two countries; one of descent, and one of birth. Their interest and their glory are the same; and his mind was capacious of both. His family was noble, and it was Dutch: that is, he was of the oldest and purest nobility that Europe can boast, among a people renowned above all others for love of their native land. Though it was never shown in insult to any human being, Lord Keppel was something high. It was a wild stock of pride, on which the tenderest of all hearts had grafted the milder virtues. He valued ancient nobility; and he was not disinclined to augment it with new honours. He valued the old nobility and the new, not as an excuse for inglorious sloth, but as an incitement to virtuous activity. He considered it as a sort of cure for selfishness and a narrow mind: conceiving that a man born in an elevated place in himself was nothing, but everything in what went before, and what was to come after him. Without much speculation, but by the sure instinct of ingenuous feelings, and by the dictates of plain, unsophisticated, natural understanding, he felt that no great commonwealth could by any possibility long subsist, without a body of some kind or other of nobility, decorated with honour, and fortified by privilege. This nobility forms the chain that connects

the ages of a nation, which otherwise (with Mr. Paine) would soon be taught that no one generation can bind another. He felt that no political fabric could be well made without some such order of things as might, through a series of time, afford a rational hope of securing unity, coherence, consistency, and stability to the state. He felt that nothing else can protect it against the levity of courts, and the greater levity of the multitude. That to talk of hereditary monarchy, without anything else of hereditary reverence in the commonwealth, was a low minded absurdity; fit only for those detestable 'fools aspiring to be knaves,' who began to forge in 1789, the false money of the French constitution—that it is one fatal objection to all *new* fancied and *new fabricated* republics (among a people, who once possessing such an advantage, have wickedly and insolently rejected it), that the *prejudice* of an old nobility is a thing that *cannot* be made. It may be improved, it may be corrected, it may be replenished; men may be taken from it or aggregated to it, but the *thing itself* is matter of *inveterate* opinion, and therefore *cannot* be matter of mere positive institution. He felt, that this nobility, in fact, does not exist in wrong of other orders of the state, but by them, and for them.

I knew the man I speak of: and, if we can divine the future out of what we collect from the past, no person living would look with more scorn and horror on the impious parricide committed on all their ancestry, and on the desperate attainder passed on all their posterity, by the Orleans, and the Rochefoucaults, and the Fayettes, and the Vicomtes de Noailles, and the false Perigords, and the long *et cetera* of the perfidious *sans-culottes* of the court, who, like demoniacs, possessed with a spirit of fallen pride, and inverted ambition, abdicated their dignities, disowned their families, betrayed the most sacred of all trusts, and by breaking to pieces a great link of society and all the cramps and holdings of the state, brought eternal confusion and desolation on their country. For the fate of the miscreant parricides themselves he would

have had no pity. Compassion for the myriads of men, of whom the world was not worthy, who by their means have perished in prisons, or on scaffolds, or are pining in beggary and exile, would leave no room in his, or in any well-formed mind, for any such sensation. We are not made at once to pity the oppressor and the oppressed.

Looking to his Batavian descent, how could he bear to behold his kindred, the descendants of the brave nobility of Holland, whose blood, prodigally poured out, had, more than all the canals, meres, and inundations of their country, protected their independence, to behold them bowed in the basest servitude to the basest and vilest of the human race: in servitude to those who in no respect were superior in dignity, or could aspire to a better place than that of hangmen to the tyrants, to whose sceptered pride they had opposed an elevation of soul, that surmounted, and overpowered, the loftiness of Castile, the haughtiness of Austria, and the overbearing arrogance of France?

Could he with patience bear that the children of that nobility, who would have deluged their country and given it to the sea, rather than submit to Louis XIV, who was then in his meridian glory, when his arms were conducted by the Turennes, by the Luxembourgs, by the Boufflers; when his councils were directed by the Colberts, and the Louvois; when his tribunals were filled by the Lamoignons and the Daguessaus—that these should be given up to the cruel sport of the Pichegrus, the Jourdans, the Santerres, under the Rolands, and Brissots, and Gorfas, and Robespierres, the Reubels, the Carnots, and Talliens, and Dantons, and the whole tribe of regicides, robbers, and revolutionary judges, that from the rotten carcase of their own murdered country, have poured out innumerable swarms of the lowest, and at once the most destructive of the classes of animated nature, which like columns of locusts, have laid waste the fairest part of the world?

Would Keppel have borne to see the ruin of the virtuous patricians, that happy union of the noble and

the burgher, who, with signal prudence and integrity have long governed the cities of the confederate republic, the cherishing fathers of their country, who, denying commerce to themselves, made it flourish in a manner unexampled under their protection ? Could Keppel have borne that a vile faction should totally destroy this harmonious construction, in favour of a robbing democracy, founded on the spurious rights of man ?

He was no great clerk, but he was perfectly well versed in the interests of Europe, and he could not have heard with patience, that the country of Grotius, the cradle of the law of nations, and one of the richest repositories of all law, should be taught a new code by the ignorant flippancy of Thomas Paine, the presumptuous foppery of La Fayette, with his stolen rights of man in his hand, the wild, profligate intrigue and turbulency of Marat, and the impious sophistry of Condorcet, in his insolent addresses to the Batavian republic.

Could Keppel, who idolized the house of Nassau, who was himself given to England, along with the blessings of the British and Dutch revolutions ; with revolutions of stability ; with revolutions which consolidated and married the liberties and the interests of the two nations for ever, could he see the fountain of British liberty itself in servitude to France ? Could he see with patience a Prince of Orange expelled as a sort of diminutive despot, with every kind of contumely, from the country, which that family of deliverers had so often rescued from slavery, and obliged to live in exile in another country, which owes its liberty to his house ?

Would Keppel have heard with patience that the conduct he held on such occasions was to become short by the knees to the faction of the homicides, to intreat them quietly to retire ? or, if the fortune of war should drive them from their first wicked and unprovoked invasion, that no security should be taken, no arrangement made, no barrier formed, no alliance entered into for the security of that, which under a foreign name is the most precious part of England ? What would he

have said, if it was even proposed that the Austrian Netherlands (which ought to be a barrier to Holland, and the tie of an alliance, to protect her against any species of rule that might be erected, or even be restored in France) should be formed into a republic under her influence, and dependent upon her power?

But above all what would he have said, if he had heard it made a matter of accusation against me, by his nephew the Duke of Bedford, that I was the author of the war? Had I a mind to keep that high distinction to myself, as from pride I might, but from justice I dare not, he would have snatched his share of it from my hand, and held it with the grasp of a dying convulsion to his end.

It would be a most arrogant presumption in me to assume to myself the glory of what belongs to his majesty, and to his ministers, and to his parliament, and to the far greater majority of his faithful people: but had I stood alone to counsel, and that all were determined to be guided by my advice, and to follow it implicitly—then I should have been the sole author of a war. But it should have been a war on my ideas and my principles. However, let his grace think as he may of my demerits with regard to the war with regicide, he will find my guilt confined to that alone. He never shall, with the smallest colour of reason, accuse me of being the author of a peace with regicide. But that is high matter; and ought not to be mixed with anything of so little moment, as what may belong to me, or even to the Duke of Bedford.

I have the honour to be, &c.

EDMUND BURKE.

LETTERS

ON THE

PROPOSALS

FOR

PEACE WITH THE REGICIDE DIRECTORY OF FRANCE

LETTERS I, II, III

ADDRESSED TO

A MEMBER OF THE PRESENT PARLIAMENT

LETTER IV

TO THE EARL FITZWILLIAM

1796

LETTER I

ON THE OVERTURES OF PEACE

My dear Sir,

Our last conversation, though not in the tone of absolute despondency, was far from cheerful. We could not easily account for some unpleasant appearances. They were represented to us as indicating the state of the popular mind; and they were not at all what we should have expected from our old ideas even of the faults and vices of the English character. The disastrous events, which have followed one upon another in a long, unbroken, funereal train, moving in a procession that seemed to have no end,—these were not the principal causes of our dejection. We feared more from what threatened to fail within, than what menaced to oppress us from abroad. To a people who have once been proud and great, and great because they were proud, a change in the national spirit is the most terrible of all revolutions.

I shall not live to behold the unravelling of the intricate plot, which saddens, and perplexes the awful drama of Providence, now acting on the moral theatre of the world. Whether for thought or for action, I am at the end of my career. You are in the middle of yours. In what part of its orbit the nation, with which we are carried along, moves at this instant, it is not easy to conjecture. It may, perhaps, be far advanced in its aphelion—but when to return?

Not to lose ourselves in the infinite void of the conjectural world, our business is with what is likely to be affected, for the better or the worse, by the wisdom or weakness of our plans. In all speculation upon

men and human affairs, it is of no small moment to distinguish things of accident from permanent causes, and from effects that cannot be altered. It is not every irregularity in our movement that is a total deviation from our course. I am not quite of the mind of those speculators, who seem assured, that necessarily, and by the constitution of things, all states have the same periods of infancy, manhood, and decrepitude that are found in the individuals who compose them. Parallels of this sort rather furnish similitudes to illustrate or to adorn, than supply analogies from whence to reason. The objects which are attempted to be forced into an analogy are not found in the same classes of existence. Individuals are physical beings subject to laws universal and invariable. The immediate cause acting in these laws may be obscure: the general results are subjects of certain calculation. But commonwealths are not physical but moral essences. They are artificial combinations, and, in their proximate efficient cause, the arbitrary productions of the human mind. We are not yet acquainted with the laws which necessarily influence the stability of that kind of work made by that kind of agent. There is not in the physical order (with which they do not appear to hold any assignable connexion) a distinct cause by which any of those fabrics must necessarily grow, flourish, or decay; nor, in my opinion, does the moral world produce anything more determinate on that subject, than what may serve as an amusement (liberal indeed, and ingenious, but still only an amusement) for speculative men. I doubt whether the history of mankind is yet complete enough, if ever it can be so, to furnish grounds for a sure theory on the internal causes which necessarily affect the fortune of a state. I am far from denying the operation of such causes: but they are infinitely uncertain, and much more obscure, and much more difficult to trace, than the foreign causes that tend to raise, to depress, and sometimes to overwhelm a community.

It is often impossible, in these political inquiries, to

find any proportion between the apparent force of any moral causes we may assign and their known operation. We are therefore obliged to deliver up that operation to mere chance, or, more piously (perhaps more rationally), to the occasional interposition and irresistible hand of the Great Disposer. We have seen states of considerable duration, which for ages have remained nearly as they have begun, and could hardly be said to ebb or flow. Some appear to have spent their vigour at their commencement. Some have blazed out in their glory a little before their extinction. The meridian of some has been the most splendid. Others, and they the greatest number, have fluctuated, and experienced at different periods of their existence a great variety of fortune. At the very moment when some of them seemed plunged in unfathomable abysses of disgrace and disaster, they have suddenly emerged. They have begun a new course and opened a new reckoning; and, even in the depths of their calamity, and on the very ruins of their country, have laid the foundations of a towering and durable greatness. All this has happened without any apparent previous change in the general circumstances which had brought on their distress. The death of a man at a critical juncture, his disgust, his retreat, his disgrace, have brought innumerable calamities on a whole nation. A common soldier, a child, a girl at the door of an inn, have changed the face of fortune, and almost of nature.

Such, and often influenced by such causes, has commonly been the fate of monarchies of long duration. They have their ebbs and their flows. This has been eminently the fate of the monarchy of France. There have been times in which no power has ever been brought so low. Few have ever flourished in greater glory. By turns elevated and depressed, that power had been, on the whole, rather on the increase; and it continued not only powerful but formidable to the hour of the total ruin of the monarchy. This fall of the monarchy was far from being preceded by any exterior symptoms of decline. The interior were not

visible to every eye; and a thousand accidents might have prevented the operation of what the most clear-sighted were not able to discern, nor the most provident to divine. A very little time before its dreadful catastrophe, there was a kind of exterior splendour in the situation of the crown, which usually adds to government strength and authority at home. The crown seemed then to have obtained some of the most splendid objects of state ambition. None of the continental powers of Europe were the enemies of France. They were all either tacitly disposed to her, or publicly connected with her; and in those who kept the most aloof there was little appearance of jealousy; of animosity there was no appearance at all. The British nation, her great preponderating rival, she had humbled; to all appearance, she had weakened; certainly had endangered, by cutting off a very large, and by far the most growing part of her empire. In that its acmé of human prosperity and greatness, in the high and palmy state of the monarchy of France, it fell to the ground without a struggle. It fell without any of those vices in the monarch, which have sometimes been the causes of the fall of kingdoms, but which existed, without any visible effect on the state, in the highest degree in many other princes; and, far from destroying their power, had only left some slight stains on their character. The financial difficulties were only pretexts and instruments of those who accomplished the ruin of that monarchy. They were not the causes of it.

Deprived of the old government, deprived in a manner of all government, France fallen as a monarchy, to common speculators might have appeared more likely to be an object of pity or insult, according to the disposition of the circumjacent powers, than to be the scourge and terror of them all: but out of the tomb of the murdered monarchy in France has arisen a vast, tremendous, unformed spectre, in a far more terrific guise than any which ever yet have overpowered the imagination, and subdued the fortitude of man.

Going straight forward to its end, unappalled by peril, unchecked by remorse, despising all common maxims and all common means, that hideous phantom overpowered those who could not believe it was possible she could at all exist, except on the principles, which habit rather than nature had persuaded them were necessary to their own particular welfare, and to their own ordinary modes of action. But the constitution of any political being, as well as that of any physical being, ought to be known, before one can venture to say what is fit for its conservation, or what is the proper means of its power. The poison of other states is the food of the new republic. That bankruptcy, the very apprehension of which is one of the causes assigned for the fall of the monarchy, was the capital on which she opened her traffic with the world.

The republic of regicide, with an annihilated revenue, with defaced manufactures, with a ruined commerce, with an uncultivated and half-depopulated country, with a discontented, distressed, enslaved, and famished people, passing, with a rapid, eccentric, incalculable course, from the wildest anarchy to the sternest despotism, has actually conquered the finest parts of Europe, has distressed, disunited, deranged, and broken to pieces all the rest; and so subdued the minds of the rulers in every nation, that hardly any resource presents itself to them, except that of entitling themselves to a contemptuous mercy by a display of their imbecility and meanness. Even in their greatest military efforts, and the greatest display of their fortitude, they seem not to hope, they do not even appear to wish, the extinction of what subsists to their certain ruin. Their ambition is only to be admitted to a more favoured class in the order of servitude under that domineering power.

This seems the temper of the day. At first the French force was too much despised. Now it is too much dreaded. As inconsiderate courage has given way to irrational fear, so it may be hoped that, through the medium of deliberate sober apprehension, we may

arrive at steady fortitude. Who knows whether indignation may not succeed to terror, and the revival of high sentiment, spurning away the delusion of a safety purchased at the expense of glory, may not yet drive us to that generous despair, which has often subdued distempers in the state for which no remedy could be found in the wisest councils ?

Other great states, having been without any regular, certain course of elevation, or decline, we may hope that the British fortune may fluctuate also ; because the public mind, which greatly influences that fortune, may have its changes. We are therefore never authorized to abandon our country to its fate, or to act or advise as if it had no resource. There is no reason to apprehend, because ordinary means threaten to fail, that no others can spring up. Whilst our heart is whole, it will find means, or make them. The heart of the citizen is a perennial spring of energy to the state. Because the pulse seems to intermit, we must not presume that it will cease instantly to beat. The public must never be regarded as incurable. I remember in the beginning of what has lately been called the seven years' war, that an eloquent writer and ingenious speculator, Dr. Brown, upon some reverses which happened in the beginning of that year, published an elaborate philosophical discourse to prove that the distinguishing features of the people of England have been totally changed, and that a frivolous effeminacy was become the national character. Nothing could be more popular than that work. It was thought a great consolation to us, the light people of this country (who were and are light, but who were not and are not effeminate), that we had found the causes of our misfortunes in our vices. Pythagoras could not be more pleased with his leading discovery. But whilst in that splenetic mood we amused ourselves in a sour, critical speculation, of which we were ourselves the objects, and in which every man lost his particular sense of the public disgrace in the epidemic nature of the distemper ; whilst, as in the Alps *goître* kept *goître*

in countenance; whilst we were thus abandoning ourselves to a direct confession of our inferiority to France, and whilst many, very many, were ready to act upon a sense of that inferiority, a few months effected a total change in our variable minds. We emerged from the gulf of that speculative despondency; and were buoyed up to the highest point of practical vigour. Never did the masculine spirit of England display itself with more energy, nor ever did its genius soar with a prouder pre-eminence over France, than at the time when frivolity and effeminacy had been at least tacitly acknowledged as their national character, by the good people of this kingdom.

For one (if they be properly treated), I despair neither of the public fortune, nor of the public mind. There is much to be done undoubtedly, and much to be retrieved. We must walk in new ways, or we can never encounter our enemy in his devious march. We are not at an end of our struggle, nor near it. Let us not deceive ourselves: we are at the beginning of great troubles. I readily acknowledge that the state of public affairs is infinitely more unpromising, than at the period I have just now alluded to; and the position of all the powers of Europe, in relation to us, and in relation to each other, is more intricate and critical beyond all comparison. Difficult indeed is our situation. In all situations of difficulty men will be influenced in the part they take, not only by the reason of the case, but by the peculiar turn of their own character. The same ways to safety do not present themselves to all men, nor to the same men in different tempers. There is a courageous wisdom: there is also a false, reptile prudence, the result not of caution, but of fear. Under misfortunes it often happens that the nerves of the understanding are so relaxed, the pressing peril of the hour so completely confounds all the faculties, that no future danger can be properly provided for, can be justly estimated, can be so much as fully seen. The eye of the mind is dazzled and vanquished. An abject distrust of ourselves, on extravagant admiration of the

enemy, present us with no hope but in a compromise with his pride by a submission to his will. This short plan of policy is the only counsel which will obtain a hearing. We plunge into a dark gulf with all the rash precipitation of fear. The nature of courage is, without a question, to be conversant with danger: but in the palpable night of their terrors, men under consternation suppose, not that it is the danger, which, by a sure instinct, calls out the courage to resist it, but that it is the courage which produces the danger. They therefore seek for a refuge from their fears in the fears themselves, and consider a temporizing meanness as the only source of safety.

The rules and definitions of prudence can rarely be exact; never universal. I do not deny that, in small, truckling states, a timely compromise with power has often been the means, and the only means, of drawling out their puny existence: but a great state is too much envied, too much dreaded to find safety in humiliation. To be secure, it must be respected. Power and eminence and consideration are things not to be begged. They must be commanded: and they, who supplicate for mercy from others, can never hope for justice through themselves. What justice they are to obtain, as the alms of an enemy, depends upon his character; and that they ought well to know before they implicitly confide.

Much controversy there has been in parliament, and not a little amongst us out of doors, about the instrumental means of this nation towards the maintenance of her dignity, and the assertion of her rights. On the most elaborate and correct detail of facts, the result seems to be that at no time has the wealth and power of Great Britain been so considerable as it is at this very perilous moment. We have a vast interest to preserve, and we possess great means of preserving it: but it is to be remembered that the artificer may be incumbered by his tools and that resources may be among impediments. If wealth is the obedient and laborious slave of virtue and of public honour, then wealth is in its

place, and has its use: but if this order is changed, and honour is to be sacrificed to the conservation of riches, riches, which have neither eyes nor hands, nor anything truly vital in them, cannot long survive the being of their vivifying powers, their legitimate masters, and their potent protectors. If we command our wealth, we shall be rich and free: if our wealth commands us, we are poor indeed. We are bought by the enemy with the treasure from our own coffers. Too great a sense of the value of a subordinate interest may be the very source of its danger, as well as the certain ruin of interests of a superior order. Often has a man lost his all because he would not submit to hazard all in defending it. A display of our wealth before robbers is not the way to restrain their boldness, or to lessen their rapacity. This display is made, I know, to persuade the people of England that thereby we shall awe the enemy, and improve the terms of our capitulation: it is made, not that we should fight with more animation, but that we should supplicate with better hopes. We are mistaken. We have an enemy to deal with who never regarded our contest as a measuring and weighing of purses. He is the Gaul that puts his *sword* into the scale. He is more tempted with our wealth as booty, than terrified with it as power. But let us be rich or poor, let us be either in what proportion we may, nature is false or this is true, that where the essential public force (of which money is but a part) is in any degree upon a par in a conflict between nations, that state, which is resolved to hazard its existence rather than to abandon its objects, must have an infinite advantage over that which is resolved to yield rather than to carry its resistance beyond a certain point. Humanly speaking, that people, which bounds its efforts only with its being, must give the law to that nation which will not push its opposition beyond its convenience.

If we look to nothing but our domestic condition, the state of the nation is full even to plethora: but if we imagine that this country can long maintain its

blood and its food, as disjoined from the community of mankind, such an opinion does not deserve refutation as absurd, but pity as insane.

I do not know that such an improvident and stupid selfishness deserves the discussion, which, perhaps, I may bestow upon it hereafter. We cannot arrange with our enemy in the present conjuncture without abandoning the interest of mankind. If we look only to our own petty peculium in the war, we have had some advantages; advantages ambiguous in their nature, and dearly bought. We have not in the slightest degree impaired the strength of the common enemy in any one of those points in which his particular force consists; at the same time that new enemies to ourselves, new allies to the regicide republic, have been made out of the wrecks and fragments of the general confederacy. So far as to the selfish part. As composing a part of the community of Europe, and interested in its fate, it is not easy to conceive a state of things more doubtful and perplexing. When Louis XIV had made himself master of one of the largest and most important provinces of Spain; when he had in a manner overrun Lombardy, and was thundering at the gates of Turin; when he had mastered almost all Germany on this side the Rhine; when he was on the point of ruining the august fabric of the empire; when, with the Elector of Bavaria in his alliance, hardly anything interposed between him and Vienna; when the Turk hung with a mighty force over the empire on the other side; I do not know that, in the beginning of 1704 (that is, in the third year of the renovated war with Louis XIV) the state of Europe was so truly alarming. To England it certainly was not. Holland (and Holland is a matter to England of value inestimable) was then powerful, was then independent, and, though greatly endangered, was then full of energy and spirit. But the great resource of Europe was in England: not in a sort of England detached from the rest of the world, and amusing herself with the puppet-show of a naval power (it can be no better, whilst all the sources of

that power, and of every sort of power, are precarious), but in that sort of England, who considered herself as embodied with Europe; but in that sort of England, who, sympathetic with the adversity or the happiness of mankind, felt that nothing in human affairs was foreign to her. We may consider it as a sure axiom, that, as on the one hand no confederacy of the least effect or duration can exist against France, of which England is not only a part, but the head, so neither can England pretend to cope with France but as connected with the body of Christendom.

Our account of the war, *as a war of communion*, to the very point in which we began to throw out lures, oglings, and glances for peace, was a war of disaster and of little else. The independent advantages obtained by us at the beginning of the war, and which were made at the expense of that common cause, if they deceive us about our largest and our surest interest, are to be reckoned amongst our heaviest losses.

The allies, and Great Britain amongst the rest (and perhaps amongst the foremost), have been miserably deluded by this great fundamental error: that it was in our power to make peace with this monster of a state, whenever we chose to forget the crimes that made it great, and the designs that made it formidable. People imagined that their ceasing to resist was the sure way to be secure. This 'pale cast of thought' sicklied over all their enterprises, and turned all their politics awry. They could not, or rather they would not, read, in the most unequivocal declarations of the enemy, and in his uniform conduct, that more safety was to be found in the most arduous war, than in the friendship of that kind of being. Its hostile amity can be obtained on no terms that do not imply an inability hereafter to resist its designs. This great, prolific error (I mean that peace was always in our power) has been the cause that rendered the allies indifferent about the *direction* of the war; and persuaded them that they might always risk a choice, and even a change in its objects. They seldom improved any advantage: hoping that

the enemy, affected by it, would make a proffer of peace. Hence it was that all their early victories have been followed almost immediately with the usual effects of a defeat; whilst all the advantages obtained by the regicides have been followed by the consequences that were natural. The discomfitures, which the republic of assassins has suffered, have uniformly called forth new exertions, which not only repaired old losses, but prepared new conquests. The losses of the allies on the contrary (no provision having been made on the speculation of such an event), have been followed by desertion, by dismay, by disunion, by a dereliction of their policy, by a flight from their principles, by an admiration of the enemy, by mutual accusations, by a distrust in every member of the alliance of its fellow, of its cause, its power, and its courage.

Great difficulties in consequence of our erroneous policy, as I have said, press upon every side of us. Far from desiring to conceal, or even to palliate, the evil in the representation, I wish to lay it down as my foundation, that never greater existed. In a moment when sudden panic is apprehended, it may be wise for a while to conceal some great public disaster, or to reveal it by degrees, until the minds of the people have time to be recollected, that their understanding may have leisure to rally, and that more steady councils may prevent their doing something desperate under the first impressions of rage or terror. But with regard to a *general* state of things, growing out of events and causes already known in the gross, there is no piety in the fraud that covers its true nature; because nothing but erroneous resolutions can be the result of false representations. Those measures which, in common distress, might be available, in greater, are no better than playing with the evil. That the effort may bear a proportion to the exigence, it is fit it should be known; known in its quality, in its extent, and in all the circumstances which attend it. Great reverses of fortune there have been, and great embarrassments in council: a principled regicide enemy possessed of the most

important part of Europe, and struggling for the rest: within ourselves a total relaxation of all authority, whilst a cry is raised against it, as if it were the most ferocious of all despotism. A worse phenomenon;—our government disowned by the most efficient member of its tribunals; ill-supported by any of their constituent parts; and the highest tribunal of all (from causes not for our present purpose to examine), deprived of all that dignity and all that efficiency which might enforce, or regulate, or, if the case required it, might supply the want of every other court. Public prosecutions are become little better than schools for treason; of no use but to improve the dexterity of criminals in the mystery of evasion; or to show with what complete impunity men may conspire against the commonwealth; with what safety assassins may attempt its awful head. Everything is secure, except what the laws have made sacred; everything is tameness and languor that is not fury and faction. Whilst the distempers of a relaxed fibre prognosticate and prepare all the morbid force of convulsion in the body of the state, the steadiness of the physician is overpowered by the very aspect of the disease [1]. The doctor of the constitution, pretending to underrate what he is not able to contend with, shrinks from his own operation. He doubts and questions the salutary but critical terrors of the cautery and the knife. He takes a poor credit even from his defeat; and covers impotence under the mask of lenity. He praises the moderation of the laws, as, in his hands, he sees them baffled and despised. Is all this, because in our day the statutes of the kingdom are not engrossed in as firm a character, and imprinted in as black and legible a type as ever? No! the law is a clear, but it is a dead letter. Dead and putrid, it is insufficient to save the state, but potent to infect and to kill. Living law, full of reason, and of equity and justice (as it is, or it should not exist), ought to be severe, and awful too; or the words of

[1] 'Mussabat tacito medicina timore.'

menace, whether written on the parchment roll of England, or cut into the brazen tablet of Rome, will excite nothing but contempt. How comes it, that in all the state prosecutions of magnitude, from the Revolution to within these two or three years, the crown has scarcely ever retired disgraced and defeated from its courts ? Whence this alarming change ? By a connexion easily felt, and not impossible to be traced to its cause, all the parts of the state have their correspondence and consent. They who bow to the enemy abroad will not be of power to subdue the conspirator at home. It is impossible not to observe that, in proportion as we approximate to the poisonous jaws of anarchy, the fascination grows irresistible. In proportion as we are attracted towards the focus of illegality, irreligion, and desperate enterprise, all the venomous and blighting insects of the state are awakened into life. The promise of the year is blasted, and shrivelled, and burned up before them. Our most salutary and most beautiful institutions yield nothing but dust and smut; the harvest of our law is no more than stubble. It is in the nature of these eruptive diseases in the state to sink in by fits, and re-appear. But the fuel of the malady remains ; and in my opinion is not in the smallest degree mitigated in its malignity, though it waits the favourable moment of a freer communication with the source of regicide to exert and to increase its force.

Is it that the people are changed, that the commonwealth cannot be protected by its laws ? I hardly think it. On the contrary, I conceive that these things happen because men are not changed, but remain always what they always were ; they remain what the bulk of us ever must be, when abandoned to our vulgar propensities, without guide, leader, or control: that is, made to be full of a blind elevation in prosperity ; to despise untried dangers ; to be overpowered with unexpected reverses ; to find no clue in a labyrinth of difficulties, to get out of a present inconvenience with any risk of future ruin ; to follow and to bow to fortune ;

to admire successful though wicked enterprise, and to imitate what we admire; to contemn the government which announces danger from sacrilege and regicide, whilst they are only in their infancy and their struggle, but which finds nothing that can alarm in their adult state, and in the power and triumph of those destructive principles. In a mass we cannot be left to ourselves. We must have leaders. If none will undertake to lead us right, we shall find guides who will contrive to conduct us to shame and ruin.

We are in a war of a *peculiar* nature. It is not with an ordinary community, which is hostile or friendly as passion or as interest may veer about: not with a state which makes war through wantonness, and abandons it through lassitude. We are at war with a system, which, by its essence, is inimical to all other governments, and which makes peace or war, as peace and war may best contribute to their subversion. It is with an *armed doctrine* that we are at war. It has, by its essence, a faction of opinion, and of interest, and of enthusiasm, in every country. To us it is a Colossus which bestrides our channel. It has one foot on a foreign shore, the other upon the British soil. Thus advantaged, if it can at all exist, it must finally prevail. Nothing can so completely ruin any of the old governments, ours in particular, as the acknowledgement, directly or by implication, of any kind of superiority in this new power. This acknowledgement we make, if, in a bad or doubtful situation of our affairs, we solicit peace; or if we yield to the modes of new humiliation, in which alone she is content to give us a hearing. By that means the terms cannot be of our choosing; no, not in any part.

It is laid in the unalterable constitution of things:—None can aspire to act greatly, but those who are of force greatly to suffer. They who made their arrangements in the first run of misadventure, and in a temper of mind the common fruit of disappointment and dismay, put a seal on their calamities. To their power they take a security against any favours which they

might hope from the usual inconstancy of fortune. I am therefore, my dear friend, invariably of your opinion (though full of respect for those who think differently) that neither the time chosen for it, nor the manner of soliciting a negotiation, were probably considered; even though I had allowed (I hardly shall allow) that with the horde of regicides we could by any selection of time, or use of means, obtain anything at all deserving the name of peace.

In one point we are lucky. The regicide has received our advances with scorn. We have an enemy, to whose virtues we can owe nothing; but on this occasion we are infinitely obliged to one of his vices. We owe more to his insolence than to our own precaution. The haughtiness by which the proud repel us has this of good in it; that in making us keep our distance, they must keep their distance too. In the present case, the pride of the regicide may be our safety. He has given time for our reason to operate; and for British dignity to recover from its surprise. From first to last he has rejected all our advances. For as we have gone, he has still left a way open to our retreat.

There is always an augury to be taken of what a peace is likely to be, from the preliminary steps that are made to bring it about. We may gather something from the time in which the first overtures are made; from the quarter whence they come; from the manner in which they are received. These discover the temper of the parties. If your enemy offers peace in the moment of success, it indicates that he is satisfied with something. It shows that there are limits to his ambition or his resentment. If he offers nothing under misfortune, it is probable, that it is more painful to him to abandon the prospect of advantage than to endure calamity. If he rejects solicitation, and will not give even a nod to the suppliants for peace, until a change in the fortune of the war threatens him with ruin, then I think it evident that he wishes nothing more than to disarm his adversary to gain time. Afterwards a question arises, which of the parties is likely to

obtain the greater advantages by continuing disarmed and by the use of time.

With these few plain indications in our minds, it will not be improper to reconsider the conduct of the enemy together with our own, from the day that a question of peace has been in agitation. In considering this part of the question, I do not proceed on my own hypothesis. I suppose, for a moment, that this body of regicide calling itself a republic, is a politic person, with whom something deserving the name of peace may be made. On that supposition, let us examine our own proceeding. Let us compute the profit it has brought, and the advantage that it is likely to bring hereafter. A peace too eagerly sought is not always the sooner obtained. The discovery of vehement wishes generally frustrates their attainment; and your adversary has gained a great advantage over you when he finds you impatient to conclude a treaty. There is in reserve, not only something of dignity, but a great deal of prudence too. A sort of courage belongs to negotiation, as well as to operations of the field. A negotiator must often seem willing to hazard the whole issue of his treaty, if he wishes to secure any one material point.

The regicides were the first to declare war. We are the first to sue for peace. In proportion to the humility and perseverance we have shown in our addresses, has been the obstinacy of their arrogance in rejecting our suit. The patience of their pride seems to have been worn out with the importunity of our courtship. Disgusted as they are with a conduct so different from all the sentiments by which they are themselves filled, they think to put an end to our vexatious solicitation by redoubling their insults.

It happens frequently that pride may reject a public advance, while interest listens to a secret suggestion of advantage. The opportunity has been afforded. At a very early period in the diplomacy of humiliation, a gentleman was sent on an errand,[1] of which from the

[1] Mr. Bird, sent to state the real situation of the Duc de Choiseul.

motive of it, whatever the event might be, we can never be ashamed. Humanity cannot be degraded by humiliation. It is its very character to submit to such things. There is a consanguinity between benevolence and humility. They are virtues of the same stock. Dignity is of as good a race; but it belongs to the family of fortitude. In the spirit of that benevolence, we sent a gentleman to beseech the directory of regicide, not to be quite so prodigal as their republic had been of judicial murder. We solicited them to spare the lives of some unhappy persons of the first distinction, whose safety at other times could not have been an object of solicitation. They had quitted France on the faith of the declaration of the rights of citizens. They never had been in the service of the regicides, nor at their hands had received any stipend. The very system and constitution of government that now prevails was settled subsequently to their emigration. They were under the protection of Great Britain, and in his majesty's pay and service. Not a hostile invasion, but the disasters of the sea, had thrown them upon a shore more barbarous and inhospitable than the inclement ocean under the most pitiless of its storms. Here was an opportunity to express a feeling for the miscries of war; and to open some sort of conversation, which (after our public overtures had glutted their pride), at a cautious and jealous distance, might lead to something like an accommodation. What was the event? A strange uncouth thing, a theatrical figure of the opera, his head shaded with three-coloured plumes, his body fantastically habited, strutted from the back scenes, and, after a short speech, in the mock heroic falsetto of stupid tragedy, delivered the gentleman who came to make the representation into the custody of a guard, with directions not to lose sight of him for a moment; and then ordered him to be sent from Paris in two hours.

Here it is impossible that a sentiment of tenderness should not strike athwart the sternness of politics, and make us recall to painful memory the difference between this insolent and bloody theatre, and the temperate,

natural majesty of a civilized court where the afflicted family of Asgill did not in vain solicit the mercy of the highest of rank, and the most compassionate of the compassionate sex.

In this intercourse, at least, there was nothing to promise a great deal of success in our future advances. Whilst the fortune of the field was wholly with the regicides, nothing was thought of but to follow where it led: and it led to everything. Not so much as a talk of treaty. Laws were laid down with arrogance. The most moderate politician in their clan [1] was chosen as the organ not so much for prescribing limits to their claims, as to mark what, for the present, they are content to leave to others. They made, not laws, not conventions, not late possession, but physical nature, and political convenience, the sole foundation of their claims. The Rhine, the Mediterranean, and the ocean were the bounds which, for the time, they assigned to the empire of regicide. What was the chamber of union of Louis XIV, which astonished and provoked all Europe, compared to this declaration? In truth, with these limits, and their principle, they would not have left even the shadow of liberty or safety to any nation. This plan of empire was not taken up in the first intoxication of unexpected success. You must recollect that it was projected, just as the report has stated it, from the very first revolt of the faction against their monarchy; and it has been uniformly pursued, as a standing maxim of national policy, from that time to this. It is, generally, in the season of prosperity that men discover their real temper, principles, and designs. But this principle, suggested in their first struggles, fully avowed in their prosperity, has, in the most adverse state of their affairs, been tenaciously adhered to. The report, combined with their conduct, forms an infallible criterion of the views of this republic.

In their fortune there has been some fluctuation. We are to see how their minds have been affected with

[1] Boissy d'Anglas.

a change. Some impression it made on them undoubtedly. It produced some oblique notice of the submissions that were made by suppliant nations. The utmost they did, was to make some of those cold, formal, general professions of a love of peace which no power has ever refused to make; because they mean little, and cost nothing. The first paper I have seen (the publication at Hamburg) making a show of that pacific disposition, discovered a rooted animosity against this nation, and an incurable rancour, even more than any one of their hostile acts. In this Hamburg declaration, they choose to suppose that the war, on the part of England, *is a war of government, begun and carried on against the sense and interests of the people*; thus sowing in their very overtures towards peace the seeds of tumult and sedition: for they never have abandoned, and never will they abandon, in peace, in war, in treaty, in any situation, or for one instant, their old, steady maxim of separating the people from their government. Let me add—and it is with unfeigned anxiety for the character and credit of ministers that I do add—if our government perseveres in its as uniform course of acting under instruments with such preambles, it pleads guilty to the charges made by our enemies against it, both on its own part, and on the part of parliament itself. The enemy must succeed in his plan for loosening and disconnecting all the internal holdings of the kingdom.

It was not enough that the speech from the throne, in the opening of the session of 1795, threw out oglings and glances of tenderness. Lest this coquetting should seem too cold and ambiguous, without waiting for its effect, the violent passion for a relation to the regicides produced a direct message from the crown, and its consequences from the two Houses of Parliament. On the part of the regicides these declarations could not be entirely passed by without notice; but in that notice they discovered still more clearly the bottom of their character. The offer made to them by the message to parliament was hinted at in their

answer; but in an obscure and oblique manner as before. They accompanied their notice of the indications manifested on our side, with every kind of insolent and taunting reflection. The regicide Directory, on the day which, in their gipsy jargon, they call the 5th of Pluviose, in return for our advances, charge us with eluding our declarations under 'evasive formalities and frivolous pretexts.' What these pretexts and evasions were, they do not say, and I have never heard. But they do not rest there. They proceed to charge us, and, as it should seem, our allies in the mass, with direct *perfidy*; they are so conciliatory in their language as to hint that this perfidious character is not new in our proceedings. However, notwithstanding this our habitual perfidy, they will offer peace 'on conditions *as* moderate'—as what? as reason and as equity require? No! as moderate 'as are suitable to their *national dignity*.' National dignity in all treaties I do admit is an important consideration. They have given us a useful hint on that subject: but dignity, hitherto, has belonged to the mode of proceeding, not to the matter of a treaty. Never before has it been mentioned as the standard for rating the conditions of peace; no, never by the most violent of conquerors. Indemnification is capable of some estimate; dignity has no standard. It is impossible to guess what acquisitions pride and ambition may think fit for their *dignity*. But lest any doubt should remain on what they think for their dignity, the regicides in the next paragraph tell us 'that they will have no peace with their enemies, until they have reduced them to a state, which will put them under an *impossibility* of pursuing their wretched projects;' that is, in plain French or English, until they have accomplished our utter and irretrievable ruin. This is their *pacific language*. It flows from their unalterable principle, in whatever language they speak, or whatever steps they take, whether of real war, or of pretended pacification. They have never, to do them justice, been at much trouble in concealing their intentions. We were as obstinately

resolved to think them not in earnest: but I confess jests of this sort, whatever their urbanity may be, are not much to my taste.

To this conciliatory and amicable public communication, our sole answer, in effect, is this—'Citizen regicides! whenever *you* find yourselves in the humour, you may have a peace with *us*. That is a point you may always command. We are constantly in attendance, and nothing you can do shall hinder us from the renewal of our supplications. You may turn us out at the door; but we will jump in at the window.'

To those who do not love to contemplate the fall of human greatness, I do not know a more mortifying spectacle than to see the assembled majesty of the crowned heads of Europe waiting as patient suitors in the ante-chamber of regicide. They wait, it seems, until the sanguinary tyrant *Carnot* shall have snorted away the fumes of the indigested blood of his sovereign. Then, when, sunk on the down of usurped pomp, he shall have sufficently indulged his meditations with what monarch he shall next glut his ravening maw, he may condescend to signify that it is his pleasure to be awake; and that he is at leisure to receive the proposals of his high and mighty clients for the terms on which he may respite the execution of the sentence he has passed upon them. At the opening of those doors, what a sight it must be to behold the plenipotentiaries of royal impotence, in the precedency, which they will intrigue to obtain, and which will be granted to them according to the seniority of their degradation, sneaking into the regicide presence, and with the relics of the smile, which they had dressed up for the levee of their masters, still flickering on their curled lips, presenting the faded remains of their courtly graces, to meet the scornful, ferocious, sardonic grin of a bloody ruffian, who, whilst he is receiving their homage, is measuring them with his eye, and fitting to their size the slider of his guillotine! These ambassadors may easily return as good courtiers as they went; but can they ever return from that degrading residence, loyal

and faithful subjects; or with any true affection to their master, or true attachment to the constitution, religion, or laws of their country? There is great danger that they, who enter smiling into this Trophonian cave, will come out of it sad and serious conspirators; and such will continue as long as they live. They will become true conductors of contagion to every country which has had the misfortune to send them to the source of that electricity. At best they will become totally indifferent to good and evil, to one institution or another. This species of indifference is but too generally distinguishable in those who have been much employed in foreign courts; but in the present case the evil must be aggravated without measure; for they go from their country, not with the pride of the old character, but in a state of the lowest degradation; and what must happen in their place of residence can have no effect in raising them to the level of true dignity, or of chaste self-estimation, either as men, or as representatives of crowned heads.

Our early proceeding, which has produced these returns of affront, appeared to me totally new, without being adapted to the new circumstances of affairs. I have called to my mind the speeches and messages in former times. I find nothing like these. You will look in the journals to find whether my memory fails me. Before this time, never was a ground of peace laid (as it were, in a parliamentary record), until it had been as good as concluded. This was a wise homage paid to the discretion of the crown. It was known how much a negotiation must suffer by having anything in the train towards it prematurely disclosed. But, when those parliamentary declarations were made, not so much as a step had been taken towards a negotiation in any mode whatever. The measure was an unpleasant and unseasonable discovery.

I conceive that another circumstance in that transaction has been as little authorized by any example; and that it is as little prudent in itself; I mean the formal recognition of the French republic. Without

entering, for the present, into a question on the good faith manifested in that measure, or on its general policy, I doubt, upon mere temporary considerations of prudence, whether it was perfectly advisable. It is not within the rules of dexterous conduct to make an acknowledgement of a contested title in your enemy, before you are morally certain that your recognition will secure his friendship. Otherwise it is a measure worse than thrown away. It adds infinitely to the strength, and consequently to the demands, of the adverse party. He has gained a fundamental point without an equivalent. It has happened as might have been foreseen. No notice whatever was taken of this recognition. In fact, the Directory never gave themselves any concern about it; and they received our acknowledgement with perfect scorn. With them it is not for the states of Europe to judge of their title: the very reverse. In their eye the title of every other power depends wholly on their pleasure.

Preliminary declarations of this sort, thrown out at random, and sown, as it were, broadcast, were never to be found in the mode of our proceeding with France and Spain, whilst the great monarchies of France and Spain existed. I do not say that a diplomatic measure ought to be, like a parliamentary or a judicial proceeding, according to strict precedent: I hope I am far from that pedantry. But this I know, that a great state ought to have some regard to its ancient maxims: especially where they indicate its dignity; where they concur with the rules of prudence; and, above all, where the circumstances of the time require that a spirit of innovation should be resisted, which leads to the humiliation of sovereign powers. It would be ridiculous to assert that those powers have suffered nothing in their estimation. I admit that the great interests of a state will for a moment supersede all other considerations: but if there was a rule that a sovereign never should let down his dignity without a sure payment to his interest, the dignity of kings would be held high enough. At present, however,

fashion governs in more serious things than furniture and dress. It looks as if sovereigns abroad were emulous in bidding against their estimation. It seems as if the pre-eminence of regicide was acknowledged; and that kings tacitly ranked themselves below their sacrilegious murderers, as natural magistrates and judges over them. It appears as if dignity were the prerogative of crime; and a temporizing humiliation the proper part for venerable authority. If the vilest of mankind are resolved to be the most wicked, they lose all the baseness of their origin, and take their place above kings. This example in foreign princes, I trust, will not spread. It is the concern of mankind, that the destruction of order should not be a claim to rank, that crimes should not be the only title to pre-eminence and honour.

At this second stage of humiliation (I mean the insulting declaration in consequence of the message to both Houses of Parliament), it might not have been amiss to pause; and not to squander away the fund of submissions, until we knew what final purposes of public interest they might answer. The policy of subjecting ourselves to further insults is not to me quite apparent. It was resolved, however, to hazard a third trial. Citizen Barthelemi had been established on the part of the new republic, at Basle; where, with his proconsulate of Switzerland and the adjacent parts of Germany, he was appointed as a sort of factor to deal in the degradation of the crowned heads of Europe. At Basle it was thought proper, in order to keep others, I suppose, in countenance, that Great Britain should appear at this market, and bid with the rest, for the mercy of the people-king.

On the 6th of March, 1796, Mr. Wickham, in consequence of authority, was desired to sound France on her disposition towards a general pacification; to know whether she would consent to send ministers to a congress at such a place as might be hereafter agreed upon; whether there would be a disposition to communicate the general grounds of a pacification such

as France (the diplomatic name of the regicide power) would be willing to propose, as a foundation for a negotiation for peace with his majesty *and his allies*: or to suggest any other way of arriving at the same end of a general pacification; but he had no authority to enter into any negotiation or discussion with citizen Barthelemi upon these subjects.

On the part of Great Britain this measure was a voluntary act, wholly uncalled for on the part of regicide. Suits of this sort are at least strong indications of a desire for accommodation. Any other body of men but the Directory would be somewhat soothed with such advances. They could not, however, begin their answer, which was given without much delay, and communicated on the 28th of the same month, without a preamble of insult and reproach. 'They doubt the sincerity of the pacific intention of this court.' She did not begin, say they, yet to 'know her real interests,' 'she did not seek peace *with good faith*.' This, or something to this effect, has been the constant preliminary observation (now grown into a sort of office-form), on all our overtures to this power: a perpetual charge on the British government of fraud, evasion, and habitual perfidy.

It might be asked, from whence did these opinions of our insincerity and ill-faith arise? It was because the British ministry (leaving to the Directory, however, to propose a better mode) proposed a *congress* for the purpose of a general pacification, and this they said 'would render negotiation endless.' From hence they immediately inferred a fraudulent intention in the offer. Unquestionably their mode of giving law would bring matters to a more speedy conclusion. As to any other method more agreeable to them than a congress, an alternative expressly proposed to them, they did not condescend to signify their pleasure.

This refusal of treating conjointly with the powers allied against this republic furnishes matter for a great deal of serious reflection. They have hitherto constantly declined any other than a treaty with a single power.

By thus dissociating every state from every other, like deer separated from the herd, each power is treated with, on the merit of his being a deserter from the common cause. In that light the regicide power finding each of them insulated and unprotected, with great facility gives the law to them all. By this system, for the present, an incurable distrust is sown amongst confederates; and in future all alliance is rendered impracticable. It is thus they have treated with Prussia, with Spain, with Sardinia, with Bavaria, with the Ecclesiastical State, with Saxony; and here we see them refuse to treat with Great Britain in any other mode. They must be worse than blind who do not see with what undeviating regularity of system, in this case and in all cases, they pursue their scheme for the utter destruction of every independent power; especially the smaller, who cannot find any refuge whatever but in some common cause.

Renewing their taunts and reflections, they tell Mr. Wickham, 'that *their* policy has no guides but openness and good faith, and that their conduct shall be conformable to these principles.' They say concerning their government, that 'yielding to the ardent desire by which it is animated to procure peace for the French republic and for all nations, it will not *fear to declare itself openly.* Charged by the constitution with the execution of the *laws,* it cannot *make* or *listen* to any proposal that would be contrary to them. The constitutional act does not permit it to consent to any alienation of that which, according to the existing laws, constitutes the territory of the republic.'

'With respect to the countries *occupied by the French armies, and which have not been united to France,* they, as well as other interests political and commercial, may become the subject of a negotiation, which will present to the Directory the means of proving how much it desires to attain speedily to a happy pacification. That the Directory is ready to receive in this respect any overtures that shall be just, reasonable, and compatible *with the dignity of the republic.*' On the head of

what is *not* to be the subject of negotiation, the Directory is clear and open. As to what may be a matter of treaty, all this open dealing is gone. She retires into her shell. There she expects overtures from *you*—and you are to guess what she shall judge just, reasonable and, above all, *compatible with her dignity.*

In the records of pride there does not exist so insulting a declaration. It is insolent in words, in manner, but in substance it is not only insulting but alarming. It is a specimen of what may be expected from the masters we are preparing for our humbled country. Their openness and candour consist in a direct avowal of their despotism and ambition. We know that their declared resolution had been to surrender no object belonging to France previous to the war. They have resolved, that the republic was entire, and must remain so. As to what she has conquered from the allies and united to the same indivisible body, it is of the same nature. That is, the allies are to give up whatever conquests they have made or may make upon France, but all which she has violently ravished from her neighbours, and thought fit to appropriate, are not to become so much as objects of negotiation.

In this unity and indivisibility of profession are sunk ten immense and wealthy provinces, full of strong, flourishing, and opulent cities (the Austrian Netherlands), the part of Europe the most necessary to preserve any communication between this kingdom and its natural allies, next to Holland the most interesting to this country, and without which Holland must virtually belong to France. Savoy and Nice, the keys of Italy, and the citadel in her hands to bridle Switzerland, are in that consolidation. The important territory of Liége is torn out of the heart of the empire. All these are integrant parts of the republic, not to be subject to any discussion, or to be purchased by any equivalent. Why? Because there is a law which prevents it. What law? The law of nations? The acknowledged public law of Europe? Treaties and conventions of parties? No; not a pretence of the

kind. It is a declaration not made in consequence of any prescription on her side, not on any cession or dereliction, actual or tacit, of other powers. It is a declaration *pendente lite* in the middle of a war, one principal object of which was originally the defence, and has since been the recovery of these very countries.

This strange law is not made for a trivial object, not for a single port, or for a single fortress, but for a great kingdom; for the religion, the morals, the laws, the liberties, the lives and fortunes of millions of human creatures, who without their consent, or that of their lawful government, are, by an arbitrary act of this regicide and homicide government which they call a law, incorporated into their tyranny.

In other words, their will is the law, not only at home, but as to the concerns of every nation. Who has made that law but the regicide republic itself, whose laws, like those of the Medes and Persians, they cannot alter or abrogate, or even so much as take into consideration? Without the least ceremony or compliment, they have sent out of the world whole sets of laws and lawgivers. They have swept away the very constitutions under which the legislators acted, and the laws were made. Even the fundamental sacred rights of man they have not scrupled to profane. They have set this holy code at nought with ignominy and scorn. Thus they treat all their domestic laws and constitutions, and even what they had considered as a law of nature; but whatever they have put their seal on for the purposes of their ambition, and the ruin of their neighbours, this alone is invulnerable, impassible, immortal. Assuming to be masters of everything human and divine, here, and here alone, it seems they are limited, 'cooped and cabined in;' and this omnipotent legislature finds itself wholly without the power of exercising its favourite attribute, the love of peace. In other words, they are powerful to usurp, impotent to restore; and equally by their power and their impotence they aggrandize themselves, and weaken and impoverish you and all other nations.

Nothing can be more proper or more manly than the state publication called a *note* on this proceeding, dated Downing-street, the 10th of April, 1796. Only that it is better expressed, it perfectly agrees with the opinion I have taken the liberty of submitting to your consideration [1]. I place it below at full length as my justification in thinking that this astonishing paper from the Directory is not only a direct negative to all treaty, but is a rejection of every principle upon which treaties could be made. To admit it for a moment were to erect this power, usurped at home, into a legislature to govern mankind. It is an authority that on a thousand occasions they have asserted in claim, and,

[1] 'This court has seen, with regret, how far the tone and spirit of that answer, the nature and extent of the demands which it contains, and the manner of announcing them, are remote from any dispositions for peace.

'The inadmissible pretension is there avowed of appropriating to France all that the laws existing there may have comprised under the denomination of French territory. To a demand such as this, is added an express declaration that no proposal contrary to it will be made, or even listened to. And even this, under the pretence of an internal regulation, the provisions of which are wholly foreign to all other nations.

'While these dispositions shall be persisted in, nothing is left for the king but to prosecute a war equally just and necessary.

'Whenever his enemies shall manifest more pacific sentiments, his majesty will, at all times, be eager to concur in them, by lending himself, in concert with his allies, to all such measures as shall be calculated to re-establish general tranquillity on conditions just, honourable, and permanent, either by the establishment of a general congress, which has been so happily the means of restoring peace to Europe, or by a preliminary discussion of the principles which may be proposed, on either side, as a foundation of a general pacification; or, lastly, by an impartial examination of any other way which may be pointed out to him for arriving at the same salutary end.'

'Downing Street, April 10, 1796.'

whenever they are able, exerted in practice. The dereliction of this whole scheme of policy became, therefore, an indispensable, previous condition to all renewal of treaty. The remark of the British cabinet on this arrogant and tyrannical claim is natural and unavoidable. Our ministry state '*That while these dispositions shall be persisted in, nothing is left for the king but to prosecute a war that is just and necessary.*'

It was of course that we should wait until the enemy showed some sort of disposition on his part to fulfil this condition. It was hoped, indeed, that our suppliant strains might be suffered to steal into the august ear in a more propitious season. That season, however, invoked by so many vows, conjurations, and prayers, did not come. Every declaration of hostility renovated, and every act pursued with double animosity—the over-running of Lombardy—the subjugation of Piedmont—the possession of its impregnable fortresses—the seizing on all the neutral states of Italy—our expulsion from Leghorn—instances for ever renewed, for our expulsion from Genoa—Spain rendered subject to them and hostile to us—Portugal bent under the yoke—half the empire over-run and ravaged, were the only signs which this mild republic thought proper to manifest of her pacific sentiments. Every demonstration of an implacable rancour and an untamable pride were the only encouragements we received to the renewal of our supplications.

Here therefore they and we were fixed. Nothing was left to the British ministry but 'to prosecute a war just and necessary'—a war equally just as at the time of our engaging in it—a war become ten times more necessary by everything which happened afterwards. This resolution was soon, however, forgot. It felt the heat of the season and melted away. New hopes were entertained from supplication. No expectations, indeed, were then formed from renewing a direct application to the French regicides through the agent-general for the humiliation of sovereigns. At length a step was taken in degradation which even went

lower than all the rest. Deficient in merits of our own, a mediator was to be sought—and we looked for that mediator at Berlin! The King of Prussia's merits in abandoning the general cause might have obtained for him some sort of influence in favour of those whom he had deserted; but I have never heard that his Prussian majesty had lately discovered so marked an affection for the court of St. James's, or for the court of Vienna, as to excite much hope of his interposing a very powerful mediation to deliver them from the distresses into which he had brought them.

If humiliation is the element in which we live, if it is become not only our occasional policy but our habit, no great objection can be made to the modes in which it may be diversified; though I confess I cannot be charmed with the idea of our exposing our lazar sores at the door of every proud servitor of the French republic, where the court dogs will not deign to lick them. We had, if I am not mistaken, a minister at that court, who might try its temper, and recede and advance as he found backwardness or encouragement. But to send a gentleman there on no other errand than this, and with no assurance whatever that he should not find, where he did find, a repulse, seems to me to go far beyond all the demands of a humiliation merely politic. I hope it did not arise from a predilection for that mode of conduct.

The cup of bitterness was not, however, drained to the dregs. Basle and Berlin were not sufficient. After so many and so diversified repulses, we were resolved to make another experiment, and to try another mediator. Among the unhappy gentlemen in whose persons royalty is insulted and degraded at the seat of plebeian pride, and upstart insolence, there is a minister from Denmark at Paris. Without any previous encouragement to that, any more than the other steps, we sent through this turnpike to demand a passport for a person who on our part was to solicit peace in the metropolis, at the footstool of regicide itself. It was not to be expected that any one of those degraded

beings could have influence enough to settle any part of the terms in favour of the candidates for further degradation; besides, such intervention would be a direct breach in their system, which did not permit one sovereign power to utter a word in the concerns of his equal.—Another repulse.—We were desired to apply directly in our persons.—We submitted and made the application.

It might be thought that here, at length, we had touched the bottom of humiliation; our lead was brought up covered with mud. But 'in the lowest deep, a lower deep' was to open for us still more profound abysses of disgrace and shame. However, in we leaped. We came forward in our own name. The passport, such a passport and safe conduct as would be granted to thieves, who might come in to betray their accomplices, and no better, was granted to British supplication. To leave no doubt of its spirit, as soon as the rumour of this act of condescension could get abroad, it was formally announced with an explanation from authority, containing an invective against the ministry of Great Britain, their habitual frauds, their proverbial, *punic* perfidy. No such state paper, as a preliminary to a negotiation for peace, has ever yet appeared. Very few declarations of war have ever shown so much and so unqualified animosity. I place it below[1] as

[1] *Official Note, extracted from the Journal of the Defenders of the Country.*

'*Executive Directory.*

'Different journals have advanced that an English plenipotentiary had reached Paris, and had presented himself to the Executive Directory, but that his propositions not having appeared satisfactory, he had received orders instantly to quit France.

'All these assertions are equally false.

'The notices given, in the English papers, of a minister having been sent to Paris, there to treat of peace, bring to recollection the overtures of Mr. Wickham to the ambassador of the republic at Basle, and the rumours circulated

a diplomatic curiosity, and in order to be the better understood, in the few remarks I have to make upon

relative to the mission of Mr. Hammond to the court of Prussia. The *insignificance*, or rather the *subtle duplicity*, the *PUNIC style of* Mr. Wickham's note, is not forgotten. According to the partisans of the English ministry, it was to Paris that Mr. Hammond was to come to speak for peace: when his destination became public, and it was known that he went to Prussia, the same writer repeated that it was to accelerate a peace, and, notwithstanding the object, now well known, of this negotiation, was to engage Prussia to break her treaties with the republic, and to return into the coalition—the court of Berlin, faithful to its engagements, repulsed these *perfidious* propositions. But in converting this intrigue into a mission for peace, the English ministry joined to the hope of giving a new enemy of France, *that of justifying the continuance of the war in the eyes of the English nation, and of throwing all the odium of it on the French government.* Such was also the aim of Mr. Wickham's note. *Such is still that of the notices given at this time in the English papers.*

'This aim will appear evident, if we reflect how difficult it is, that the ambitious government of England should sincerely wish for a peace that would *snatch from it its maritime preponderancy, would re-establish the freedom of the seas, would give a new impulse to the Spanish, Dutch, and French marines*, and would carry to the highest degree of prosperity the industry and commerce of those nations in which it has always found *rivals*, and which it has considered as *enemies* of its commerce, when they were tired of being its *dupes*.

'But there will *no longer be any credit given to the pacific intentions of the English ministry, when it is known that its gold and its intrigues, its open practices, and its insinuations, besiege more than ever the cabinet of Vienna, and are one of the principal obstacles to the negotiation which* that cabinet *would of itself be induced to enter on for peace.*

'They will no longer *be credited*, finally, when the moment of the rumour of these overtures being circulated is considered. *The English nation supports impatiently the continuance of the war, a reply must be made to its complaints, its reproaches:* the parliament is about to re-open

a peace which indeed defies all description— none but itself can be its parallel.'

I pass by all the insolence and contumely of the performance, as it comes from them. The present question is not how we are to be affected with it in regard to our dignity. That is gone. I shall say no more about it. Light lie the earth on the ashes of English pride. I shall only observe upon it *politically*, and as furnishing a direction for our own conduct in this low business.

The very idea of a negotiation for peace, whatever the inward sentiments of the party may be, implies some confidence in their faith, some degree of belief in the professions which are made concerning it. A temporary and occasional credit, at least, is granted. Otherwise men stumble on the very threshold. I therefore wish to ask what hope we can have of their good faith, who, as the very basis of the negotiation, assume the ill faith and treachery of those they have to deal with ? The terms, as against us, must be such as imply a full security against a treacherous conduct— that is, such terms as this Directory stated in its first declaration, to place us 'in an utter impossibility of executing our wretched projects.' This is the omen, and the sole omen, under which we have consented to open our treaty.

The second observation I have to make upon it (much connected undoubtedly with the first), is that they have informed you of the result they propose from the kind of peace they mean to grant you ; that is to say, the union they propose among nations, with the view of rivalling our trade and destroying our naval power ; and this they suppose (and with good reason too) must be the inevitable effect of their peace. It forms one of

its sittings ; the mouths of the orators who will declaim against the war must be shut, the demand of new taxes must be justified ; and to obtain these results, it is necessary to be enabled to advance, that the French government refuses every reasonable proposition of peace.'

their principal grounds for suspecting our ministers could not be in good earnest in their proposition. They make no scruple beforehand to tell you the whole of what they intend; and this is what we call, in the modern style, the acceptance of a proposition for peace! In old language it would be called a most haughty, offensive, and insolent rejection of all treaty.

Thirdly, they tell you what they conceive to be the perfidious policy which dictates your delusive offer; that is, the design of cheating not only them, but the people of England, against whose interest and inclination this war is supposed to be carried on.

If we proceed in this business, under this preliminary declaration, it seems to me that we admit (now for the third time), by something a great deal stronger than words, the truth of the charges of every kind which they make upon the British ministry, and the grounds of those foul imputations. The language used by us, which in other circumstances would not be exceptionable, in this case tends very strongly to confirm and realize the suspicion of our enemy. I mean the declaration that, if we do not obtain such terms of peace as suits our opinion of what our interest requires, *then*, and in *that* case, we shall continue the war with vigour. This offer, so reasoned, plainly implies that, without it, leaders themselves entertain great doubts of the opinion and good affections of the British people; otherwise there does not appear any cause why we should proceed under the scandalous construction of our enemy, upon the former offer made by Mr. Wickham, and on the new offer made directly at Paris. It is not, therefore, from a sense of dignity, but from the danger of radicating that false sentiment in the breasts of the enemy, that I think, under the auspices of this declaration, we cannot, with the least hope of a good event, or, indeed, with any regard to the common safety, proceed in the train of this negotiation. I wish ministry would seriously consider the importance of their seeming to confirm the enemy in an opinion that his frequent use of appeals to the people against their

government has not been without its effect. If it puts an end to this war it will render another impracticable.

Whoever goes to the directorial presence under this passport, with this offensive comment, and foul explanation, goes, in the avowed sense of the court to which he is sent, as the instrument of a government dissociated from the interests and wishes of the nation, for the purpose of cheating both the people of France and the people of England. He goes out the declared emissary of a faithless ministry. He has perfidy for his credentials. He has national weakness for his full powers. I yet doubt whether any one can be found to invest himself with that character. If there should, it would be pleasant to read his instructions on the answer which he is to give to the Directory, in case they should repeat to him the substance of the manifesto which he carries with him in his portfolio.

So much for the *first* manifesto of the regicide court which went along with the passport. Lest this declaration should seem the effect of haste, or a mere sudden effusion of pride and insolence, on full deliberation, about a week after comes out a second. This manifesto is dated the 5th of October, one day before the speech from the throne, on the vigil of the festive day of cordial unanimity so happily celebrated by all parties in the British parliament. In this piece the regicides, our worthy friends (I call them by advance and by courtesy what by law I shall be obliged to call them hereafter), our worthy friends, I say, renew and enforce the former declaration concerning our faith and sincerity, which they pinned to our passport. On three other points, which run through all their declarations, they are more explicit than ever.

First, they more directly undertake to be the real representatives of the people of this kingdom: and on a supposition, in which they agree with our parliamentary reformers that the House of Commons is not that representative, the function being vacant, they, as our true constitutional organ, inform his majesty and the world of the sense of the nation. They tell us that

'the English people see with regret his majesty's government squandering away the funds which had been granted to him.' This astonishing assumption of the public voice of England is but a slight foretaste of the usurpation which, on a peace, we may be assured they will make of all the powers in all the parts of our vassal constitution. 'If they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?'

Next they tell us a condition to our treaty, that 'this government must abjure the unjust hatred it bears to them, and at last open its ears to the voice of humanity.'—Truly this is, even from them, from an extraordinary demand. Hitherto it seems we have put wax into our ears to shut them up against the tender, soothing strains, in the *affettuoso* of humanity, warbled from the throats of Reubel, Carnot, Tallien, and the whole chorus of confiscators, domiciliary visitors, committee-men of research, jurors and presidents of revolutionary tribunals, regicides, assassins, massacres, and Septembrisers. It is not difficult to discern what sort of humanity our government is to learn from the syren singers. Our government also, I admit with some reason, as a step towards the proposed fraternity, is required to abjure the unjust hatred which it bears to this body of honour and virtue. I thank God I am neither a minister nor a leader of opposition. I protest I cannot do what they desire. I could not do it if I were under the guillotine; or as they ingeniously and pleasantly express it, 'looking out of the little national window.' Even at that opening I could receive none of their light. I am fortified against all such affections by the declaration of the government, which I must yet consider as lawful, made on the 29th of October, 1793[1], and still ringing in my ears. This declaration

[1] 'In their place has succeeded a system destructive of all public order, maintained by proscriptions, exiles, and confiscations without number; by arbitrary imprisonment; by massacres which cannot be remembered without horror; and at length by the execrable murder of a just and bene-

was transmitted not only to our commanders by sea and land, but to our ministers in every court of Europe.

ficent sovereign, and of the illustrious princess, who, with an unshaken firmness, has shared all the misfortunes of her royal consort, his protracted sufferings, his cruel captivity, and ignominious death.'—'They (the allies) have had to encounter acts of aggression without pretext, open violation of all treaties, unprovoked declarations of war; in a word, whatever corruption, intrigue, or violence, could effect for the purpose, openly avowed of subverting all the institutions of society, and of extending over all the nations of Europe that confusion, which has produced the misery of France.'—

'This state of things cannot exist in France, without involving all the surrounding powers in one common danger, without giving them the right, without imposing it upon them as a duty, to stop the progress of an evil, which exists only by the successive violation of all law and all property, and which attacks the fundamental principles by which mankind is united in the bonds of civil society.'—'The king would impose none other than equitable and moderate conditions, not such as the expense, the risks, and the sacrifices of the war might justify; but such as his majesty thinks himself under the indispensable necessity of requiring, with a view to these considerations, and still more to that of his own security and of the future tranquillity of Europe. His majesty desires nothing more sincerely than thus to terminate a war, which he in vain endeavoured to avoid, and all the calamities of which, as now experienced by France, are to be attributed only to the ambition, the perfidy, and the violence of those, whose crimes have involved their own country in misery, and disgraced all civilized nations.'—'The king promises on his part the suspension of hostilities, friendship, and (as far as the course of events will allow, of which the will of man cannot dispose) security and protection to all those who, by declaring for a monarchical form of government, shall shake off the yoke of sanguinary anarchy; of that anarchy which has broken all the most sacred bonds of society, dissolved all the relations of civil life, violated every right, confounded every duty; which uses the name of liberty to exercise the most cruel tyranny, to annihilate all property, to seize

It is the most eloquent and highly finished in the style, the most judicious in the choice of topics, the most orderly in the arrangement, and the most rich in the colouring, without employing the smallest degree of exaggeration, of any state paper that has ever yet appeared. An ancient writer, Plutarch, I think it is, quotes some verses on the eloquence of Pericles, who is called 'the only orator that left stings in the minds of his hearers.' Like his, the eloquence of the declaration, not contradicting, but enforcing sentiments of the truest humanity, has left stings that have penetrated more than skin-deep into my mind; and never can they be extracted by all the surgery of murder; never can the throbbings they have created be assuaged by all the emollient cataplasms of robbery and confiscation. I *cannot* love the republic.

The third point, which they have more clearly expressed than ever, is of equal importance with the rest; and with them furnishes a complete view of the regicide system. For they demand as a condition, without which our ambassador of obedience cannot be received with any hope of success, that he shall be 'provided with full powers to negotiate a peace between the French republic and Great Britain, and to conclude it *definitely* between the TWO powers.' With their spear they draw a circle about us. They will hear nothing of a joint treaty. We must make a peace separately from our allies. We must, as the very first and preliminary step, be guilty of that perfidy towards our friends and associates, with which they reproach us in our transactions with them our enemies. We are

on all possessions; which founds its power on the pretended consent of the people, and itself carries fire and sword through extensive provinces for having demanded their laws, their religion, and their *lawful sovereign*.'

Declaration sent by his majesty's command to the commanders of his majesty's fleets and armies employed against France, and to his majesty's ministers employed at foreign courts.

Whitehall, October 29, 1793.

called upon scandalously to betray the fundamental securities to ourselves and to all nations. In my opinion (it is perhaps but a poor one) if we are meanly bold enough to send an ambassador such as this official note of the enemy requires, we cannot even dispatch our emissary without danger of being charged with a breach of our alliance. Government now understands the full meaning of the passport.

Strange revelations have happened in the ways of thinking and in the feelings of men: but it is a very extraordinary coalition of parties indeed, and a kind of unheard-of unanimity in public councils, which can impose this new-discovered system of negotiation as sound national policy on the understanding of a spectator of this wonderful scene, who judges on the principles of anything he ever before saw, read, or heard of, and, above all, on the understanding of a person who has in his eye the transactions of the last seven years.

I know it is supposed that, if good terms of capitulation are not granted, after we have thus so repeatedly hung out the white flag, the national spirit will revive with tenfold ardour. This is an experiment cautiously to be made. *Reculer pour mieux sauter*, according to the French by-word, cannot be trusted to as a general rule of conduct. To diet a man into weakness and languor, afterwards to give him the greater strength, has more of the empiric than the rational physician. It is true that some persons have been kicked into courage; and this is no bad hint to give to those who are too forward and liberal in bestowing insults and outrages on their passive companions. But such a course does not at first view appear a well-chosen discipline to form men to a nice sense of honour, or a quick resentment of injuries. A long habit of humiliation does not seem a very good preparative to manly and vigorous sentiment. It may not leave, perhaps, enough of energy in the mind fairly to discern what are good terms or what are not. Men low and dispirited may regard those terms as not at all amiss,

which in another state of mind they would think intolerable: if they grow peevish in this state of mind, they may be roused, not against the enemy whom they have been taught to fear, but against the ministry [1], who are more within their reach, and who have refused conditions that are not unreasonable, from power that they have been taught to consider as irresistible.

If all that for some months I have heard have the least foundation, I hope it has not, the ministers are, perhaps, not quite so much to be blamed, as their condition is to be lamented. I have been given to understand, that these proceedings are not in their origin properly theirs. It is said that there is a secret in the House of Commons. It is said that ministers act not according to the votes, but according to the dispositions, of the majority. I hear that the minority has long since spoken the general sense of the nation; and that to prevent those who compose it from having the open and avowed lead in that House, or perhaps in both Houses, it was necessary to pre-occupy their ground, and to take their propositions out of their mouths, even with the hazard of being afterwards reproached with a compliance which it was foreseen would be fruitless.

If the general disposition of the people be, as I hear it is, for an immediate peace with regicide, without so much as considering our public and solemn engagements to the party in France whose cause we had espoused, or the engagements expressed in our general alliances, not only without an inquiry into the terms, but with a certain knowledge that none but the worst terms will be offered, it is all over with us. It is strange, but it may be true, that as the danger from Jacobinism is increased in my eyes and in yours, the fear of it is lessened in the eyes of many people who formerly regarded it with horror, it seems, they act under the impression of terrors of another sort, which have

[1] Ut lethargicus hic, cum fit pugil, et medicum urget.
HOR.

frightened them out of their first apprehensions. But let their fears or their hopes, or their desires, be what they will, they should recollect that they who would make peace without a previous knowledge of the terms, make a surrender. They are conquered. They do not treat; they receive the law. Is this the disposition of the people of England? Then the people of England are contented to seek in the kindness of a foreign, systematic enemy, combined with a dangerous faction at home, a security which they cannot find in their own patriotism and their own courage. They are willing to trust to the sympathy of regicides the guarantee of the British monarchy. They are content to rest their religion on the piety of atheists by establishment. They are satisfied to seek in the clemency of practised murderers the security of their lives. They are pleased to confide their property to the safeguard of those who are robbers by inclination, interest, habit, and system. If this be our deliberate mind, truly we deserve to lose, what it is impossible we should long retain, the name of a nation.

In matters of state, a constitutional competence to act is in many cases the smallest part of the question. Without disputing (God forbid I should dispute!) the sole competence of the king and the parliament, each in its province, to decide on war and peace, I venture to say, no war *can* be long carried on against the will of the people. This war, in particular, cannot be carried on unless they are enthusiastically in favour of it. Acquiescence will not do. There must be zeal. Universal zeal in such a cause, and at such a time as this is, cannot be looked for; neither is it necessary. Zeal in the larger part carries the force of the whole. Without this, no government, certainly not our government, is capable of a great war. None of the ancient, regular governments have wherewithal to fight abroad with a foreign foe, and at home to overcome repining, reluctance, and chicane. It must be some portentous thing, like regicide France, that can exhibit such a prodigy. Yet even she, the mother of monsters, more

prolific than the country of old called *Ferax monstrorum*, shows symptoms of being almost effete already; and she will be so, unless the fallow of a peace comes to recruit her fertility. But whatever may be represented concerning the meanness of the popular spirit, I, for one, do not think so desperately of the British nation. Our minds, as I have said, are light, but they are not depraved. We are dreadfully open to delusion and to dejection; but we are capable of being animated and undeceived.

It cannot be concealed; we are a divided people. But in divisions, where a part is to be taken, we are to make a muster of our strength. I have often endeavoured to compute and to class those who, in any political view, are to be called the people. Without doing something of this sort we must proceed absurdly. We should not be much wiser, if we pretended to very great accuracy in our estimate; but I think, in the calculation I have made, the error cannot be very material. In England and Scotland, I compute that those of adult age, not declining in life, of tolerable leisure, for such discussions, and of some means of information, more or less, and who are above menial dependence (or what virtually is such), may amount to about four hundred thousand. There is such a thing as a natural representative of the people. This body is that representative; and on this body, more than on the legal constituent, the artificial representative depends. This is the British public; and it is a public very numerous. The rest, when feeble, are the objects of protection; when strong, the means of force. They, who affect to consider that part of us in any other light, insult while they cajole us; they do not want us for counsellors in deliberation, but to list us as soldiers for battle.

Of these four hundred thousand political citizens, look upon one-fifth, or about eighty thousand, to be pure Jacobins; utterly incapable of amendment; objects of eternal vigilance; and, when they break out, of legal constraint. On these, no reason, no

argument, no example, no venerable authority, can have the slightest influence. They desire a change; and they will have it if they can. If they cannot have it by English cabal, they will make no sort of scruple of having it by the cabal of France, into which already they are virtually incorporated. It is only their assured and confident expectation of the advantages of French fraternity, and the approaching blessings of regicide intercourse, that skins over their mischievous dispositions with a momentary quiet.

This minority is great and formidable. I do not know whether if I aimed at the total overthrow of a kingdom, I should wish to be encumbered with a larger body of partisans. They are more easily disciplined and directed than if the number were greater. These, by their spirit of intrigue, and by their restless agitating activity, are of a force far superior to their numbers; and, if times grew the least critical, have the means of debauching or intimidating many of those who are now sound, as well as of adding to their force large bodies of the more passive part of the nation. This minority is numerous enough to make a mighty cry for peace, or for war, or for any object they are led vehemently to desire. By passing from place to place with a velocity incredible, and diversifying their character and description, they are capable of mimicking the general voice. We must not always judge of the generality of the opinion by the noise of the acclamation.

The majority, the other four-fifths, is perfectly sound; and of the best possible disposition to religion, to government, to the true and undivided interest of their country. Such men are generally disposed to peace. They who are in possession of all they wish are languid and improvident. With this fault (and I admit its existence in all its extent) they would not endure to hear of a peace that led to the ruin of everything for which peace is dear to them. However, the desire of peace is essentially the weak side of that kind of men. All men that are ruined are ruined on the side of their natural propensities. There they are

unguarded. Above all, good men do not suspect that their destruction is attempted through their virtues. This their enemies are perfectly aware of: and, accordingly, they, the most turbulent of mankind, who never make a scruple to shake the tranquillity of their country to its centre, raise a continual cry for peace with France. 'Peace with regicide, and war with the rest of the world,' is their motto. From the beginning, and even whilst the French gave the blows, and we hardly opposed the *vis inertiae* to their efforts, from that day to this hour, like importunate Guinea-fowls, crying one note day and night, they have called for peace.

In this they are, as I confess in all things they are, perfectly consistent. They, who wish to unite themselves to your enemies, naturally desire, that you should disarm yourself by a peace with these enemies. But it passes my conception, how they, who wish well to their country on its ancient system of laws and manners, come not to be doubly alarmed, when they find nothing but a clamour for peace, in the mouths of the men on earth the least disposed to it in their natural or in their habitual character.

I have a good opinion of the general abilities of the Jacobins: not that I suppose them better born than others; but strong passions awaken the faculties; they suffer not a particle of the man to be lost. The spirit of enterprise gives to this description the full use of all their native energies. If I have reason to conceive that my enemy, who, as such, must have an interest in my destruction, is also a person of discernment and sagacity, then I must be quite sure that, in a contest, the object he violently pursues is the very thing by which my ruin is likely to be the most perfectly accomplished. Why do the Jacobins cry for peace? Because they know that, this point gained, the rest will follow of course. On our part, why are all the rules of prudence, as sure as the laws of material nature, to be at this time reversed? How comes it that now, for the first time, men think it right to be

governed by the counsels of their enemies? Ought they not rather to tremble, when they are persuaded to travel on the same road; and to tend to the same place of rest?

The minority I speak of is not susceptible of an impression from the topics of argument to be used to the larger part of the community. I therefore do not address to them any part of what I have to say. The more forcibly I drive my arguments against their system, so as to make an impression where I wish to make it, the more strongly I rivet them in their sentiments. As for us, who compose the far larger, and what I call the far better part of the people; let me say that we have not been quite fairly dealt with when called to this deliberation. The Jacobin minority have been abundantly supplied with stores and provisions of all kinds towards their warfare. No sort of argumentative materials, suited to their purposes, have been withheld. False they are, unsound, sophistical; but they are regular in their direction. They all bear one way, and they all go to the support of the substantial merits of their cause. The others have not had the question so much as fairly stated to them.

There has not been in this century any foreign peace or war, in its origin, the fruit of popular desire, except the war that was made with Spain in 1739. Sir Robert Walpole was forced into the war by the people, who were inflamed to this measure by the most leading politicians, by the first orators, and the greatest poets, of the time. For that war, Pope sang his dying notes. For that war, Johnson, in more energetic strains, employed the voice of his early genius. For that war, Glover distinguished himself in the way in which his muse was the most natural and happy. The crowd readily followed the politicians in the cry for a war which threatened little bloodshed, and which promised victories that were attended with something more solid than glory. A war with Spain was a war of plunder. In the present conflict with regicide, Mr. Pitt has not hitherto had, nor will perhaps for a few days have,

many prizes to hold out in the lottery of war, to attempt the lower part of our character. He can only maintain it by an appeal to the higher; and to those, in whom that higher part is the most predominant, he must look the most for his support. Whilst he holds out no inducements to the wise, nor bribes to the avaricious, he may be forced by a vulgar cry into a peace ten times more ruinous than the most disastrous war. The weaker he is in the fund of motives which apply to our avarice, to our laziness, and to our lassitude, if he means to carry the war to any end at all, the stronger he ought to be in his addresses to our magnanimity and to our reason.

In stating that Walpole was driven by a popular clamour into a measure not to be justified, I do not mean wholly to excuse his conduct. My time of observation did not exactly coincide with that event: but I read much of the controversies then carried on. Several years after the contests of parties had ceased, the people were amused, and in a degree warmed, with them. The events of that era seemed then of magnitude, which the revolutions of our time have reduced to parochial importance; and the debates, which then shook the nation, now appear of no higher moment than a discussion in a vestry. When I was very young, a general fashion told me I was to admire some of the writings against that minister; a little more maturity taught me as much to despise them. I observed one fault in his general proceeding. He never manfully put forward the entire strength of his cause. He temporized, he managed, and, adopting very nearly the sentiments of his adversaries, he opposed their inferences. This, for a political commander, is the choice of a weak post. His adversaries had the better of the argument, as he handled it, not as the reason and justice of his cause enabled him to manage it. I say this, after having seen, and with some care examined, the original documents concerning certain important transactions of those times. They perfectly satisfied me of the extreme injustice of that war, and

of the falsehood of the colours, which to his own ruin, and guided by a mistaken policy, he suffered to be daubed over that measure. Some years after, it was my fortune to converse with many of the principal actors against that minister, and with those who principally excited that clamour. None of them, no not one, did in the least defend the measure, or attempt to justify their conduct. They condemned it as freely as they would have done in commenting upon any proceeding in history, in which they were totally unconcerned. Thus it will be. They who stir up the people to improper desires, whether of peace or war. will be condemned by themselves. They who weakly yield to them will be condemned by history.

In my opinion, the present ministry are as far from doing full justice to their cause in this war, as Walpole, was from doing justice to the peace which at that time he was willing to preserve. They throw the light on one side only of their case; though it is impossible they should not observe that the other side which is kept in the shade has its importance too. They must know that France is formidable, not only as she is France, but as she is Jacobin France. They knew from the beginning that the Jacobin party was not confined to that country. They knew, they felt, the strong disposition of the same faction in both countries to communicate and to co-operate. For some time past, these two points have been kept, and even industriously kept, out of sight. France is considered as merely a foreign power; and the seditious English only as a domestic faction. The merits of the war with the former have been argued solely on political grounds. To prevent the mischievous doctrines of the latter from corrupting our minds, matter and argument have been supplied abundantly, and even to surfeit, on the excellency of our own government. But nothing has been done to make us feel in what manner the safety of that government is connected with the principle and with the issue of this war. For anything which in the late discussion has appeared,

the war is entirely collateral to the state of Jacobinism ; as truly a foreign war to us and to all our home concerns, as the war with Spain in 1739, about *garda-costas*, the Madrid Convention, and the fable of Captain *Jenkins's* ears.

Whenever the adverse party has raised a cry for peace with the regicide, the answer has been little more than this : 'That the administration wished for such a peace, full as much as the opposition ; but that the time was not convenient for making it.' Whatever else has been said was much in the same spirit. Reasons of this kind never touched the substantial merits of the war. They were in the nature of dilatory pleas, exceptions of form, previous questions. Accordingly all the arguments against a compliance with what was represented as the popular desire (urged on with all possible vehemence and earnestness by the Jacobins) have appeared flat and languid, feeble and evasive. They appeared to aim only at gaining time. They never entered into the peculiar and distinctive character of the war. They spoke neither to the understanding nor to the heart. Cold as ice themselves, they never could kindle in our breast a spark of that zeal which is necessary to a conflict with an adverse zeal ; much less were they made to infuse into our minds that stubborn, persevering spirit which alone is capable of bearing up against those vicissitudes of fortune which will probably occur, and those burdens which must be inevitably borne, in a long war. I speak it emphatically, and with a desire that it should be marked, in a *long* war ; because, without such a war, no experience has yet told us that a dangerous power has ever been reduced to measure or to reason. I do not throw back my view to the Peloponnesian war of twenty-seven years ; nor to two of the Punic wars, the first of twenty-four, the second of eighteen ; nor to the more recent war concluded by the treaty of Westphalia, which continued, I think, for thirty. I go to what is but just fallen behind living memory, and immediately touches our own country. Let the portion of our history from

the year 1689 to 1713 be brought before us. We shall find that in all that period of twenty-four years, there were hardly five that could be called a season of peace ; and the interval between the two wars was in reality nothing more than a very active preparation for renovated hostility. During that period, every one of the propositions of peace came from the enemy : the first, when they were accepted, at the peace of Ryswick ; the second, where they were rejected, at the congress at Gertrudenburg ; the last, when the war ended by the treaty of Utrecht. Even then, a very great part of the nation, and that which contained by far the most intelligent statesmen, was against the conclusion of the war. I do not enter into the merits of that question as between the parties. I only state the existence of that opinion as a fact, from whence you may draw such an inference as you think properly arises from it.

It is for us at present to recollect what we have been ; and to consider what, if we please, we may be still. At the period of those wars, our principal strength was found in the resolution of the people ; and that in the resolution of a part only of the then whole, which bore no proportion to our existing magnitude. England and Scotland were not united at the beginning of that mighty struggle. When, in the course of the contest, they were conjoined, it was in a raw, an ill-cemented, an unproductive union. For the whole duration of the war, and long after, the names and other outward and visible signs of approximation, rather augmented than diminished our insular feuds. They were rather the causes of new discontents and new troubles, than promoters of cordiality and affection. The now single and potent Great Britain was then, not only two countries, but, from the party heats in both, and the divisions formed in each of them, each of the old kingdoms within itself, in effect, was made up of two hostile nations. Ireland, now so large a source of the common opulence and power, and which, wisely managed, might be made much more beneficial and much more effective, was

then the heaviest of the burdens. An army, not much less than forty thousand men, was drawn from the general effort, to keep that kingdom in a poor, unfruitful, and resourceless subjection.

Such was the state of the empire. The state of our finances was worse, if possible. Every branch of the revenue became less productive after the Revolution. Silver, not as now a sort of counter, but the body of the current coin, was reduced so low, as not to have above three parts in four of the value in the shilling. In the greater part the value hardly amounted to a fourth. It required a dead expense of three millions sterling to renew the coinage. Public credit, that great but ambiguous principle, which has so often been predicted as the cause of our certain ruin, but which for a century has been the constant companion, and often the means, of our prosperity and greatness, had its origin, and was cradled, I may say, in bankruptcy and beggary. At this day we have seen parties contending to be admitted, at a moderate premium, to advance eighteen millions to the exchequer. For infinitely smaller loans, the chancellor of the exchequer of that day, Montagu, the father of public credit, counter-securing the state by the appearance of the city with the Lord Mayor of London at his side, was obliged, like a solicitor for an hospital, to go cap in hand from shop to shop, to borrow a hundred pounds, and even smaller sums. When made up in driblets as they could, their best securities were at an interest of twelve per cent. Even the paper of the Bank (now at par with cash, and generally preferred to it) was often at a discount of twenty per cent. By this the state of the rest may be judged.

As to our commerce, the imports and exports of the nation, now six-and-forty millions, did not then amount to ten. The inland trade, which is commonly passed by in this sort of estimates, but which, in part growing out of the foreign, and connected with it, is more advantageous, and more substantially nutritive to the state, is not only grown in a proportion of near

five to one as the foreign, but has been augmented, at least in a tenfold proportion. When I came to England, I remember but one river navigation, the rate of carriage on which was limited by an act of parliament. It was made in the reign of William III; I mean that of the Aire and Calder. The rate was settled at thirteen pence. So high a price demonstrated the feebleness of these beginnings of our inland intercourse. In my time, one of the longest and sharpest contests I remember in your House, and which rather resembled a violent contention amongst national parties than a local dispute, was, as well as I can recollect, to hold the price up to three pence. Even this, which a very scanty justice to the proprietors required, was done with infinite difficulty. As to private credit, there were not, as I believe, twelve bankers' shops at that time out of London. In this their number, when I first saw the country, I cannot be quite exact; but certainly those machines of domestic credit were then very few. They are now almost in every market town: and this circumstance (whether the thing be carried to an excess or not) demonstrates the astonishing increase of private confidence, of general circulation, and of internal commerce; an increase out of all proportion to the growth of the foreign trade. Our naval strength in the time of King William's war was nearly matched by that of France; and, though conjoined with Holland, then a maritime power hardly inferior to our own, even with that force we were not always victorious. Though finally superior, the allied fleets experienced many unpleasant reverses on their own element. In two years three thousand vessels were taken from the English trade. On the Continent we lost almost every battle we fought.

In 1697 (it is not quite a hundred years ago), in that state of things, amidst the general debasement of the coin, the fall of the ordinary revenue, the failure of all the extraordinary supplies, the ruin of commerce, and the almost total extinction of an infant credit, the

chancellor of the exchequer himself, whom we have just seen begging from door to door—came forward to move a resolution, full of vigour, in which, far from being discouraged by the generally adverse fortune, and the long continuance of the war, the commons agreed to address the crown in the following manly, spirited, and truly animated style :—

'This is the EIGHTH year in which your majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects the commons, in parliament assembled, have assisted your majesty with large supplies for carrying on a just and necessary war, in defence of our religion, and preservation of our laws, and vindication of the rights and liberties of the people of England.'

Afterwards they proceeded in this manner :—'To show to your majesty and all Christendom, that the commons of England will not be *amused* or diverted from their firm resolutions of obtaining, by WAR, a safe and honourable peace, we do, in the name of those we represent, renew our assurances to support your majesty and your government against all your enemies at home and abroad ; and that we will effectually assist you in carrying on the war against France.'

The amusement and diversion they speak of was the suggestion of a treaty *proposed by the enemy*, and announced from the throne. Thus the people of England felt in the *eighth*, not in the *fourth* year of the war. No sighing or panting after negotiation ; no motions from the opposition to force the ministry into a peace ; no messages from ministers to palsy and deaden the resolution of parliament or the spirit of the nation. They did not so much as advise the king to listen to the propositions of the enemy, nor to seek for peace, but through the mediation of a vigorous war. This address was moved in a hot, a divided, a factious, and, in a great part, disaffected House of Commons, and it was carried *nemine contradicente*.

While that first war (which was ill smothered by the treaty of Ryswick) slept in the thin ashes of a seeming peace, a new conflagration was in its immediate

causes. A fresh and a far greater war was in preparation. A year had hardly elapsed when arrangements were made for renewing the contest with tenfold fury. The steps which were taken, at that time, to compose, to reconcile, to unite, and to discipline, all Europe against the growth of France, certainly furnish to a statesman the finest and most interesting part in the history of that great period. It formed the masterpiece of King William's policy, dexterity, and perseverance. Full of the idea of preserving, not only a local civil liberty, united with order, to our country, but to embody it in the political liberty, the order, and the independence of nations united under a natural head, the king called upon his parliament to put itself into a posture '*to preserve to England the weight and influence it at present had on the councils and affairs* ABROAD. It will be requisite *Europe* should see you will not be wanting to yourselves.'

Baffled as that monarch was, and almost heart-broken at the disappointment he met with in the mode he first proposed for that great end, he held on his course. He was faithful to his object; and in councils, as in arms, over and over again repulsed, over and over again he returned to the charge. All the mortifications he had suffered from the last parliament, and the greater he had to apprehend from that newly chosen, were not capable of relaxing the vigour of his mind. He was in Holland when he combined the vast plan of his foreign negotiations. When he came to open his design to his ministers in England, even the sober firmness of Somers, the undaunted resolution of Shrewsbury, and the adventurous spirit of Montagu and Orford, were staggered. They were not yet mounted to the elevation of the king. The cabinet, then the regency, met on the subject at Tunbridge Wells, the 28th of August, 1698; and there Lord Somers holding the pen, after expressing doubts on the state of the Continent, which they ultimately refer to the king, as best informed, they give him a most discouraging portrait of the spirit of this

nation. 'So far as relates to England', say these ministers, 'it would be want of duty not to give your majesty this clear account, that *there* is *a deadness and want of spirit in the nation universally*, so as not to be at all disposed to *entering into a new war*. That they seem to be *tired out with taxes* to a degree beyond what was discerned, till it appeared upon occasion of the *late elections*. This is the truth of the fact upon which your majesty will determine what resolution ought to be taken.'

His majesty did determine; and did take and pursue his resolution. In all the tottering imbecility of a new government, and with parliament totally unmanageable, he persevered. He persevered to expel the fears of his people by his fortitude—to steady their fickleness by his constancy—to expand their narrow prudence by his enlarged wisdom—to sink their factious temper in his public spirit.—In spite of his people he resolved to make them great and glorious; to make England, inclined to shrink into her narrow self, the arbitress of Europe, the tutelary angel of the human race. In spite of the ministers, who staggered under the weight that his mind imposed upon theirs, unsupported as they felt themselves by the popular spirit, he infused into them his own soul, he renewed in them their ancient heart, he rallied them in the same cause.

It required some time to accomplish this work. The people were first gained, and, through them, their distracted representatives. Under the influence of King William, Holland had rejected the allurements of every seduction, and had resisted the terrors of every menace. With Hannibal at her gates, she had nobly and magnanimously refused all separate treaty, or anything which might for a moment appear to divide her affection or her interest, or even to distinguish her in identity from England. Having settled the great point of the consolidation (which he hoped would be eternal) of the countries made for a common interest, and common sentiment, the king,

in his message to both Houses, calls their attention to the affairs of the *States General.* The House of Lords was perfectly sound, and entirely impressed with the wisdom and dignity of the king's proceedings. In answer to the message, which you will observe was narrowed to a single point (the danger of the States General), after the usual professions of zeal for his service, the lords opened themselves at large. They go far beyond the demands of the message. They express themselves as follows: 'We take this occasion *further* to assure your majesty that we are sensible of the *great and imminent danger to which the States General are exposed. And we perfectly agree with them in believing that their safety and ours are so inseparably united, that whatsoever is ruin to the one must be fatal to the other.*

'We humbly desire your majesty will be pleased *not only* to make good all the articles of any *former* treaties to the States General, but that you will enter into a strict league, offensive and defensive, with them, *for their common preservation; and that you will invite into it all princes and states who are concerned in the present visible danger, arising from the union of France and Spain.*

'And we further desire your majesty, that you will be pleased to enter into such alliances with the *emperor,* as your majesty shall think fit, pursuant to the ends of the treaty of 1689; towards all which we assure your majesty of our hearty and sincere assistance; not doubting, but whenever your majesty shall be obliged to be engaged for the defence of your allies, *and securing the liberty and quiet of Europe,* Almighty God will protect your sacred person in so righteous a cause. And that the unanimity, wealth, and courage of your subjects will carry your majesty with honour and success *through all the difficulties of a* JUST WAR.'

The House of Commons was more reserved; the late popular disposition was still in a great degree prevalent in the representative, after it had been made to change in the constituent body. The principle of the grand

alliance was not directly recognized in the resolution of the commons, nor the war announced, though they were well aware the alliance was formed for the war. However, compelled by the returning sense of the people, they went so far as to fix the three great immovable pillars of the safety and greatness of England, as they were then, as they are now, and as they must ever be to the end of time. They asserted in general terms the necessity of supporting Holland, of keeping united with our allies, and maintaining the liberty of Europe; though they restricted their vote to the succours stipulated by actual treaty. But now they were fairly embarked, they were obliged to go with the course of the vessel; and the whole nation, split before into a hundred adverse factions, with a king at its head evidently declining to his tomb, the whole nation, lords, commons, and people, proceeded as one body, informed by one soul. Under the British union, the union of Europe was consolidated; and it long held together with a degree of cohesion, firmness, and fidelity, not known before or since in any political combination of that extent.

Just as the last hand was given to this immense and complicated machine, the master workman died; but the work was formed on true mechanical principles, and it was as truly wrought. It went by the impulse it had received from the first mover. The man was dead; but the grand alliance survived in which King William lived and reigned. That heartless and dispirited people, whom Lord Somers had represented about two years before, as dead in energy and operation, continued that war to which it was supposed they were unequal in mind, and in means, for nearly thirteen years.

For what have I entered into all this detail? To what purpose have I recalled your view to the end of the last century? It has been done to show that the British nation was then a great people—to point how and by what means they came to be exalted above the vulgar level, and to take that lead which

they assumed among mankind. To qualify us for that pre-eminence, we had then a high mind and a constancy unconquerable; we were then inspired with no flashy passions, but such as were durable as well as warm, such as corresponded to the great interests we had at stake. This force of character was inspired, as all such spirit must ever be, from above. Government gave the impulse. As well may we fancy that of itself the sea will swell, and that without winds the billows will insult the adverse shore, as that the gross mass of the people will be moved, and elevated, and continue by a steady and permanent direction to bear upon one point, without the influence of superior authority, or superior mind.

This impulse ought, in my opinion, to have been given in this war; and it ought to have been continued to it at every instant. It is made, if ever war was made, to touch all the great springs of action in the human breast. It ought not to have been a war of apology. The minister had, in this conflict wherewithal to glory in success; to be consoled in adversity; to hold high his principle in all fortunes. If it were not given him to support the falling edifice, he ought to bury himself under the ruins of the civilized world. All the art of Greece, and all the pride and power of eastern monarchs, never heaped upon their ashes so grand a monument.

There were days when his great mind was up to the crisis of the world he was called to act in[1]. His manly eloquence was equal to the elevated wisdom of such sentiments. But the little have triumphed over the great: an unnatural (as it should seem) not an unusual victory. I am sure you cannot forget with how much uneasiness we heard, in conversation, the language of more than one gentleman at the opening of this contest, 'that he was willing to try the war for a year or two, and if it did not succeed, then to vote for peace'. As if war was a matter of experiment!

[1] See the Declaration.

As if you could take it up or lay it down as an idle frolic! As if the dire goddess that presides over it, with her murderous spear in her hand, and her gorgon at her breast, was a coquette to be flirted with! We ought with reverence to approach that tremendous divinity, that loves courage, but commands counsel. War never leaves where it found a nation. It is never to be entered into without mature deliberation; not a deliberation lengthened out into a perplexing indecision, but a deliberation leading to a sure and fixed judgement. When so taken up, it is not to be abandoned without reason as valid, as fully, and as extensively considered. Peace may be made as unadvisedly as war. Nothing is so rash as fear; and the councils of pusillanimity very rarely put off, whilst they are always sure to aggravate, the evils from which they would fly.

In that great war carried on against Louis XIV for near eighteen years, government spared no pains to satisfy the nation that though they were to be animated by a desire of glory, glory was not their ultimate object; but that everything dear to them, in religion, in law, in liberty, everything which as freemen, as Englishmen, and as citizens of the great commonwealth of Christendom, they had at heart, was then at stake. This was to know the true art of gaining the affections and confidence of a high-minded people; this was to understand human nature. A danger to avert a danger—a present inconvenience and suffering to prevent a foreseen future, and a worse calamity—these are the motives that belong to an animal, who, in his constitution, is at once adventurous and provident; circumspect and daring; whom his Creator has made, as the poet says, 'of large discourse, looking before and after'. But never can a vehement and sustained spirit of fortitude be kindled in a people by a war of calculation. It has nothing that can keep the mind erect under the gusts of adversity. Even where men are willing, as sometimes they are, to barter their blood for lucre, to hazard their safety for the gratification of their avarice,

the passion which animates them to that sort of conflict, like all the shortsighted passions, must see its objects distinct and near at hand. The passions of the lower order are hungry and impatient. Speculative plunder; contingent spoil; future, long adjourned, uncertain booty; pillage which must enrich a late posterity, and which possibly may not reach to posterity at all; these, for any length of time, will never support a mercenary war. The people are in the right. The calculation of profit in all such wars is false. On balancing the account of such wars, ten thousand hogsheads of sugar are purchased at ten thousand times their price. The blood of man should never be shed but to redeem the blood of man. It is well shed for our family, for our friends, for our God, for our country, for our kind. The rest is vanity; the rest is crime.

In the war of the grand alliance, most of these considerations voluntarily and naturally had their part. Some were pressed into the service. The political interest easily went into the track of the natural sentiment. In the reverse course the carriage does not follow freely. I am sure the natural feeling, as I have just said, is a far more predominant ingredient in this war, than in that of any other that ever was waged by this kingdom.

If the war made to prevent the union of two crowns upon one head was a just war; this, which is made to prevent the tearing all crowns from all heads which ought to wear them, and with the crowns to smite off the sacred heads themselves, this is a just war.

If a war to prevent Louis XIV from imposing his religion was just, a war to prevent the murderers of Louis XVI from imposing their irreligion upon us is just; a war to prevent the operation of a system, which makes life without dignity, and death without hope, is a just war.

If to preserve political independence and civil freedom to nations was a just ground of war; a war to preserve national independence, property, liberty, life

and honour, from certain, universal havoc, is a war just, necessary, manly, pious: and we are bound to persevere in it by every principle, divine and human, as long as the system which menaces them all, and all equally, has an existence in the world.

You, who have looked at this matter with as fair and impartial an eye as can be united with a feeling heart, you will not think it a hardy assertion, when I affirm, that it were far better to be conquered by any other nation, than to have this faction for a neighbour. Before I felt myself authorized to say this, I considered the state of all the countries in Europe for these last three hundred years, which have been obliged to submit to a foreign law. In most of those I found the condition of the annexed countries even better, certainly not worse, than the lot of those which were the patrimony of the conqueror. They wanted some blessings—but they were free from many very great evils. They were rich and tranquil. Such was Artois, Flanders, Lorraine, Alsatia, under the old government of France. Such was Silesia under the King of Prussia. They, who are to live in the vicinity of this new fabric, are to prepare to live in perpetual conspiracies and seditions; and to end at last, in being conquered, if not to her dominion, to her resemblance. But when we talk of conquest by other nations, it is only to put a case. This is the only power in Europe by which it is *possible* we should be conquered. To live under the continual dread of such immeasurable evils is itself a grievous calamity. To live without the dread of them is to turn the danger into the disaster. The influence of such a France is equal to a war, its example more wasting than a hostile irruption. The hostility with any other power is separable and accidental; this power, by the very condition of its existence, by its very essential constitution, is in a state of hostility with us, and with all civilized people[1].

[1] See Declaration, Whitehall, October 29, 1793.

A government of the nature of that set up at our very door has never been hitherto seen, or even imagined, in Europe. What our relation to it will be cannot be judged by other relations. It is a serious thing to have connexion with a people, who live only under positive, arbitrary, and changeable institutions; and those not perfected nor supplied, nor explained, by any common acknowledged rule of moral science. I remember that in one of my last conversations with the late Lord Camden, we were struck much in the same manner with the abolition in France of the law, as a science of methodized and artificial equity. France, since her revolution, is under the sway of a sect, whose leaders have deliberately, at one stroke, demolished the whole body of that jurisprudence which France had pretty nearly in common with other civilized countries. In that jurisprudence were contained the elements and principles of the law of nations, the great ligament of mankind. With the law they have of course destroyed all seminaries in which jurisprudence was taught, as well as all the corporations established for its conservation. I have not heard of any country, whether in Europe or Asia, or even in Africa on this side of Mount Atlas, which is wholly without some such colleges and such corporations, except France. No man, in a public or private concern, can divine by what rule or principle her judgements are to be directed; nor is there to be found a professor in any university, or a practitioner in any court, who will hazard an opinion of what is or is not law in France, in any case whatever. They have not only annulled all their old treaties; but they have renounced the law of nations, from whence treaties have their force. With a fixed design they have outlawed themselves, and to their power outlawed all other nations.

Instead of the religion and the law by which they were in a great politic communion with the Christian world, they have constructed their republic on three bases, all fundamentally opposite to those on which

the communities of Europe are built. Its foundation is laid in regicide, in Jacobinism, and in atheism; and it has joined to those principles a body of systematic manners, which secures their operation.

If I am asked, how I would be understood in the use of these terms, regicide, Jacobinism, atheism, and a system of corresponding manners, and their establishment? I will tell you:

I call a commonwealth *regicide*, which lays it down as a fixed law of nature, and a fundamental right of man, that all government, not being a democracy, is an usurpation[1]. That all kings, as such, are usurpers; and for being kings may and ought to be put to death, with their wives, families, and adherents. The commonwealth which acts uniformly upon those principles, and which, after abolishing every festival of religion, chooses the most flagrant act of a murderous regicide treason for a feast of eternal commemoration, and which forces all her people to observe it—this I call *regicide by establishment.*

Jacobinism is the revolt of the enterprising talents of a country against its property. When private men form themselves into associations for the purpose of destroying the pre-existing laws and institutions of their country; when they secure to themselves an army, by dividing among the people of no property the estates of the ancient and lawful proprietors; when a state recognizes those acts; when it does not make confiscations for crimes, but makes crimes for confiscations; when it has its principal strength, and

[1] Nothing could be more solemn than their promulgation of this principle as a preamble to the destructive code of their famous articles for the decomposition of society into whatever country they should enter. 'La Convention Nationale, après avoir entendu le rapport de ses comités de finances, de la guerre et diplomatiques réunis, fidelle *au principe de souveraineté de peuples qui ne lui permet pas de reconnoitre aucune institution qui y porte atteinte,*' &c. &c. Décret sur le rapport de Cambon, December 18, 1792, and see the subsequent proclamation.

all its resources in such a violation of property; when it stands chiefly upon such a violation; massacring by judgements, or otherwise, those who make any struggle for their old legal government, and their legal, hereditary, or acquired possessions—I call this *Jacobinism by establishment.*

I call it *atheism by establishment,* when any state, as such, shall not acknowledge the existence of God as a moral governor of the world; when it shall offer to Him no religious or moral worship;—when it shall abolish the Christian religion by a regular decree;—when it shall persecute with a cold, unrelenting, steady cruelty, by every mode of confiscation, imprisonment, exile, and death, all its ministers;—when it shall generally shut up, or pull down churches; when the few buildings which remain of this kind shall be opened only for the purpose of making a profane apotheosis of monsters, whose vices and crimes have no parallel amongst men, and whom all other men consider as objects of general detestation, and the severest animadversion of law. When, in the place of that religion of social benevolence, and of individual self-denial, in mockery of all religion, they institute impious, blasphemous, indecent theatric rites, in honour of their vitiated, perverted reason, and erect altars to the personification of their own corrupted and bloody republic;—when schools and seminaries are founded at the public expense to poison mankind, from generation to generation, with the horrible maxims of this impiety;—when wearied out with incessant martyrdom, and the cries of a people hungering and thirsting for religion, they permit it, only as a tolerated evil—I call this *atheism by establishment.*

When to these establishments of regicide, of Jacobinism, and of atheism, you add the *correspondent system of manners,* no doubt can be left on the mind of a thinking man concerning their determined hostility to the human race. Manners are of more importance than laws. Upon them, in a great measure, the laws

depend. The law touches us but here and there, and now and then. Manners are what vex or soothe, corrupt or purify, exalt or debase, barbarize or refine us, by a constant, steady, uniform, insensible operation, like that of the air we breathe in. They give their whole form and colour to our lives. According to their quality, they aid morals, they supply them, or they totally destroy them. Of this the new French legislators were aware; therefore, with the same method, and under the same authority, they settled a system of manners, the most licentious, prostitute, and abandoned, that ever has been known, and at the same time the most coarse, rude, savage, and ferocious. Nothing in the revolution, no, not to a phrase or a gesture, not to the fashion of a hat or a shoe, was left to accident. All has been the result of design: all has been matter of institution. No mechanical means could be devised in favour of this incredible system of wickedness and vice, that has not been employed. The noblest passions, the love of glory, the love of country, have been debauched into means of its preservation and its propagation. All sorts of shows and exhibitions, calculated to inflame and vitiate the imagination, and pervert the moral sense, have been contrived. They have sometimes brought forth five or six hundred drunken women, calling at the bar of the assembly for the blood of their own children, as being royalists or constitutionalists. Sometimes they have got a body of wretches, calling themselves fathers, to demand the murder of their sons, boasting that Rome had but one Brutus, but that they could show five hundred. There were instances, in which they inverted, and retaliated the impiety, and produced sons, who called for the execution of their parents. The foundation of their republic is laid in moral paradoxes. Their patriotism is always prodigy. All those instances to be found in history, whether real or fabulous, of a doubtful public spirit at which morality is perplexed, reason is staggered, and from which affrighted nature recoils, are their

chosen, and almost sole examples for the instruction of their youth.

The whole drift of their institution is contrary to that of the wise legislators of all countries, who aimed at improving instincts into morals, and at grafting the virtues on the stock of the natural affections. They, on the contrary, have omitted no pains to eradicate every benevolent and noble propensity in the mind of men. In their culture it is a rule always to graft virtues on vices. They think everything unworthy of the name of public virtue, unless it indicates violence on the private. All their new institutions (and with them everything is new), strike at the root of our social nature. Other legislators, knowing that marriage is the origin of all relations, and consequently the first element of all duties, have endeavoured, by every art, to make it sacred. The Christian religion, by confining it to the pairs, and by rendering that relation indissoluble, has by these two things done more towards the peace, happiness, settlement, and civilization of the world, than by any other part in this whole scheme of Divine Wisdom. The direct contrary course has been taken in the synagogue of antichrist, I mean in that forge and manufactory of all evil, the sect which predominated in the Constituent Assembly of 1789. Those monsters employed the same, or greater industry, to desecrate and degrade that state, which other legislators have used to render it holy and honourable. By a strange, uncalled-for declaration, they pronounced that marriage was no better than a common, civil contract. It was one of their ordinary tricks, to put their sentiments into the mouths of certain personated characters, which they theatrically exhibited at the bar of what ought to be a serious assembly. One of these was brought out in the figure of a prostitute, whom they called by the affected name of 'a mother without being a wife'. This creature they made to call for a repeal of the incapacities, which in civilized states are put upon bastards. The prostitutes of the assembly gave to this their puppet the sanction of

their greater impudence. In consequence of the principles laid down, and the manners authorized, bastards were not long after put on the footing of the issue of lawful unions. Proceeding in the spirit of the first authors of their constitution, succeeding assemblies went the full length of the principle, and gave a licence to divorce at the mere pleasure of either party, and at a month's notice. With them the matrimonial connexion is brought into so degraded a state of concubinage, that, I believe, none of the wretches in London, who kept warehouses of infamy, would give out one of their victims to private custody on so short and insolent a tenure. There was indeed a kind of profligate equity in giving to women the same licentious power. The reason they assigned was as infamous as the act; declaring that women had been too long under the tyranny of parents and of husbands. It is not necessary to observe upon the horrible consequences of taking one half of the species wholly out of the guardianship and protection of the other.

The practice of divorce, though in some countries permitted, has been discouraged in all. In the East, polygamy and divorce are in discredit; and the manners correct the laws. In Rome, whilst Rome was in its integrity, the few causes allowed for divorce amounted in effect to a prohibition. They were only three. The arbitrary was totally excluded; and accordingly some hundreds of years passed, without a single example of that kind. When manners were corrupted, the laws were relaxed; as the latter always follow the former, when they are not able to regulate them, or to vanquish them. Of this circumstance the legislators of vice and crime were pleased to take notice, as an inducement to adopt their regulation; holding out a hope that the permission would as rarely be made use of. They knew the contrary to be true; and they had taken good care that the laws should be well seconded by the manners. Their law of divorce, like all their laws, had not for its object the relief of

domestic uneasiness, but the total corruption of all morals, the total disconnexion of social life.

It is a matter of curiosity to observe the operation of this encouragement to disorder. I have before me the Paris paper, correspondent to the usual register of births, marriages, and deaths. Divorce, happily, is no regular head of registry amongst civilized nations. With the Jacobins it is remarkable that divorce is not only a regular head, but it has the post of honour. It occupies the first place in the list. In the three first months of the year 1793, the number of divorces in that city amounted to 562. The marriages were 1785; so that the proportion of divorces to marriages was not much less than one to three; a thing unexampled, I believe, among mankind. I caused an inquiry to be made at Doctors' Commons, concerning the number of divorces; and found, that all the divorces (which, except by special act of parliament, are separations, and not proper divorces), did not amount in all those courts, and in a hundred years, to much more than one-fifth of those that passed in the single city of Paris, in three months. I followed up the inquiry relative to that city through several of the subsequent months until I was tired, and found the proportions still the same. Since then I have heard that they have declared for a revisal of these laws: but I know of nothing done. It appears as if the contract that renovates the world was under no law at all. From this we may take our estimate of the havoc that has been made through all the relations of life. With the Jacobins of France, vague intercourse is without reproach; marriage is reduced to the vilest concubinage; children are encouraged to cut the throats of their parents; mothers are taught that tenderness is no part of their character, and, to demonstrate their attachment to their party, that they ought to make no scruple to rake with their bloody hands in the bowels of those who came from their own.

To all this let us join the practice of *cannibalism*, with which, in the proper terms, and with the greatest

truth, their several factions accuse each other. By cannibalism, I mean their devouring as a nutriment of their ferocity, some part of the bodies of those they have murdered; their drinking the blood of their victims, and forcing the victims themselves to drink the blood of their kindred slaughtered before their faces. By cannibalism, I mean also to signify all their nameless, unmanly, and abominable insults on the bodies of those they slaughter.

As to those whom they suffer to die a natural death, they do not permit them to enjoy the last consolations of mankind, or those rights of sepulture, which indicate hope, and which mere nature has taught to mankind, in all countries, to soothe the afflictions, and to cover the infirmity of mortal condition. They disgrace men in the entry into life, they vitiate and enslave them through the whole course of it, and they deprive them of all comfort at the conclusion of their dishonoured and depraved existence. Endeavouring to persuade the people that they are no better than beasts, the whole body of their institution tends to make them beasts of prey, furious and savage. For this purpose the active part of them is disciplined into a ferocity which has no parallel. To this ferocity there is joined not one of the rude, unfashioned virtues, which accompany the vices, where the whole are left to grow up together in the rankness of uncultivated nature. But nothing is left to nature in their systems.

The same discipline which hardens their hearts relaxes their morals. Whilst courts of justice were thrust out by revolutionary tribunals, and silent churches were only the funeral monuments of departed religion, there were no fewer than nineteen or twenty theatres, great and small, most of them kept open at the public expense, and all of them crowded every night. Among the gaunt, haggard forms of famine and nakedness, amidst the yells of murder, the tears of affliction, and the cries of despair, the song, the dance, the mimic scene, the buffoon laughter, went on as regularly as in the gay hour of festive peace. I have

it from good authority, that under the scaffold of judicial murder, and the gaping planks that poured down blood on the spectators, the space was hired out for a show of dancing dogs. I think, without concert, we have made the very same remark on reading some of their pieces, which being written for other purposes, let us into a view of their social life. It struck us that the habits of Paris had no resemblance to the finished virtues, or to the polished vice, and elegant, though not blameless luxury, of the capital of a great empire. Their society was more like that of a den of outlaws upon a doubtful frontier; of a lewd tavern for the revels and debauches of banditti, assassins, bravos, smugglers, and their more desperate paramours, mixed with bombastic players, the refuse and rejected offal of strolling theatres, puffing out ill-sorted verses about virtue, mixed with the licentious and blasphemous songs, proper to the brutal and hardened course of life belonging to that sort of wretches. This system of manners in itself is at war with all orderly and moral society, and is in its neighbourhood unsafe. If great bodies of that kind were anywhere established in a bordering territory, we should have a right to demand of their governments the suppression of such a nuisance. What are we to do if the government and the whole community is of the same description? Yet that government has thought proper to invite ours to lay by its unjust hatred, and to listen to the voice of humanity as taught by their example.

The operation of dangerous and delusive first principles obliges us to have recourse to the true ones. In the intercourse between nations, we are apt to rely too much on the instrumental part. We lay too much weight upon the formality of treaties and compacts. We do not act much more wisely when we trust to the interests of men as guarantees of their engagements. The interests frequently tear to pieces the engagements; and the passions trample upon both. Entirely to trust to either, is to disregard our own safety, or not to know mankind. Men are not tied to one another by papers

and seals. They are led to associate by resemblances, by conformities, by sympathies. It is with nations as with individuals. Nothing is so strong a tie of amity between nation and nation as correspondence in laws, customs, manners, and habits of life. They have more than the force of treaties in themselves. They are obligations written in the heart. They approximate men to men, without their knowledge, and sometimes against their intentions. The secret, unseen, but irrefragable bond of habitual intercourse holds them together, even when their perverse and litigious nature sets them to equivocate, scuffle, and fight, about the terms of their written obligations.

As to war, if it be the means of wrong and violence, it is the sole means of justice amongst nations. Nothing can banish it from the world. They who say otherwise, intending to impose upon us, do not impose upon themselves. But it is one of the greatest objects of human wisdom to mitigate those evils which we are unable to remove. The conformity and analogy of which I speak, incapable, like everything else, of preserving perfect trust and tranquillity among men, has a strong tendency to facilitate accommodation, and to produce a generous oblivion of the rancour of their quarrels. With this similitude, peace is more of peace, and war is less of war. I will go further. There have been periods of time in which communities, apparently in peace with each other, have been more perfectly separated than, in latter times, many nations in Europe have been in the course of long and bloody wars. The cause must be sought in the similitude throughout Europe of religion, laws, and manners. At bottom, these are all the same. The writers on public law have often called this *aggregate* of nations a commonwealth. They had reason. It is virtually one great state having the same basis of general law, with some diversity of provincial customs and local establishments. The nations of Europe have had the very same Christian religion, agreeing in the fundamental parts, varying a little in the ceremonies and

in the subordinate doctrines. The whole of the polity and economy of every country in Europe has been derived from the same sources. It was drawn from the old Germanic or Gothic customary, from the feudal institutions which must be considered as an emanation from that customary; and the whole has been improved and digested into system and discipline by the Roman law. From hence arose the several orders, with or without a monarch (which are called states), in every European country; the strong traces of which, where monarchy predominated, were never wholly extinguished or merged in despotism. In the few places where monarchy was cast off, the spirit of European monarchy was still left. Those countries still continued countries of states; that is, of classes, orders, and distinctions such as had before subsisted, or nearly so. Indeed the force and form of the institution called states continued in greater perfection in those republican communities than under monarchies. From all those sources arose a system of manners and of education which was nearly similar in all this quarter of the globe; and which softened, blended, and harmonized the colours of the whole. There was little difference in the form of the universities for the education of their youth, whether with regard to faculties, to sciences, or to the more liberal and elegant kinds of erudition. From this resemblance in the modes of intercourse, and in the whole form and fashion of life, no citizen of Europe could be altogether an exile in any part of it. There was nothing more than a pleasing variety to recreate and instruct the mind, to enrich the imagination, and to meliorate the heart. When a man travelled or resided for health, pleasure, business, or necessity, from his own country, he never felt himself quite abroad.

The whole body of this new scheme of manners, in support of the new scheme of politics, I consider as a strong and decisive proof of determined ambition and systematic hostility. I defy the most refining ingenuity to invent any other cause for the total departure of

the Jacobin republic from every one of the ideas and usages, religious, legal, moral, or social, of this civilized world, and for her tearing herself from its communion with such studied violence, but from a formed resolution of keeping no terms with that world. It has not been, as has been falsely and insidiously represented, that these miscreants had only broke with their old government. They made a schism with the whole universe, and that schism extended to almost everything great and small. For one, I wish, since it is gone thus far, that the breach had been so complete, as to make all intercourse impracticable: but partly by accident, partly by design, partly from the resistance of the matter, enough is left to preserve intercourse, whilst amity is destroyed or corrupted in its principle.

This violent breach of the community of Europe we must conclude to have been made (even if they had not expressly declared it over and over again) either to force mankind into an adoption of their system, or to live in perpetual enmity with a community the most potent we have ever known. Can any person imagine that, in offering to mankind this desperate alternative, there is no indication of a hostile mind, because men in possession of the ruling authority are supposed to have a right to act without coercion in their own territories? As to the right of men to act anywhere according to their pleasure, without any moral tie, no such right exists. Men are never in a state of *total* independence of each other. It is not the condition of our nature: nor is it conceivable how any man can pursue a considerable course of action without its having some effect upon others; or, of course, without producing some degree of responsibility for his conduct. The *situations* in which men relatively stand produce the rules and principles of that responsibility, and afford directions to prudence in exacting it.

Distance of place does not extinguish the duties of the rights of men; but it often renders their exercise impracticable. The same circumstance of distance

renders the noxious effects of an evil system in any community less pernicious. But there are situations where this difficulty does not occur; and in which, therefore, these duties are obligatory, and these rights are to be asserted. It has ever been the method of public jurists to draw a great part of the analogies, on which they form the law of nations, from the principles of law which prevail in civil community. Civil laws are not all of them merely positive. Those, which are rather conclusions of legal reason than matters of statutable provision, belong to universal equity, and are universally applicable. Almost the whole praetorian law is such. There is a *law of neighbourhood* which does not leave a man perfectly master on his own ground. When a neighbour sees a *new erection*, in the nature of a nuisance, set up at his door, he has a right to represent it to the judge; who, on his part, has a right to order the work to be stayed; or, if established, to be removed. On this head the parent law is express and clear, and has made many wise provisions, which, without destroying, regulate and restrain the right of *ownership*, by the right of *vicinage*. No *innovation* is permitted that may redound, even secondarily, to the prejudice of a neighbour. The whole doctrine of that important head of praetorian law, '*De novi operis nunciatione*,' is founded on the principle that no *new* use should be made of a man's private liberty of operating upon his private property, from whence a detriment may be justly apprehended by his neighbour. This law of denunciation is prospective. It is to anticipate what is called *damnum infectum*, or *damnum nondum factum*, that is a damage justly apprehended, but not actually done. Even before it is clearly known, whether the innovation be damageable or not, the judge is competent to issue a prohibition to innovate, until the point can be determined. This prompt interference is grounded on principles favourable to both parties. It is preventive of mischief difficult to be repaired, and of ill blood difficult to be softened. The rule of law, therefore, which comes

before the evil, is amongst the very best parts of equity, and justifies the promptness of the remedy; because, as it is well observed, *Res damni infecti celeritatem desiderat, et periculosa est dilatio.* This right of denunciation does not hold, when things continue, however inconveniently to the neighbourhood, according to the *ancient* mode. For there is a sort of presumption against novelty, drawn out of a deep consideration of human nature and human affairs; and the maxim of jurisprudence is well laid down, *Vetustas pro lege semper habetur.*

Such is the law of civil vicinity. Now where there is no constituted judge, as between independent states there is not, the vicinage itself is the natural judge. It is, preventively, the assertor of its own rights, or, remedially, their avenger. Neighbours are presumed to take cognizance of each other's acts. '*Vicini vicinorum facta praesumuntur scire.*' This principle, which, like the rest, is as true of nations, as of individual men, has bestowed on the grand vicinage of Europe a duty to know, and a right to prevent, any capital innovation which may amount to the erection of a dangerous nuisance[1]. Of the importance of that innovation, and the mischief of that nuisance, they are, to be sure, bound to judge not litigiously: but it is in their competence to judge. They have uniformly acted on this right. What in civil society is a ground of action, in politic society is a ground of war. But the exercise of that competent jurisdiction is a matter of moral prudence. As suits in civil society, so war in the political, must ever be a matter of great deliberation. It is not this or that particular proceeding, picked out here and there, as a subject of quarrel, that will do. There must be an aggregate of mischief.

[1] 'This state of things cannot exist in France without involving all the surrounding powers in one common danger, without giving them the right, without imposing it on them as a duty, to stop the progress of an evil which attacks the fundamental principles by which mankind is united in civil society.' Declaration, October 29, 1793.

There must be marks of deliberation, there must be traces of design, there must be indications of malice, there must be tokens of ambition. There must be force in the body where they exist, there must be energy in the mind. When all these circumstances are combined, or the important parts of them, the duty of the vicinity calls for the exercise of its competence: and the rules of prudence do not restrain, but demand it.

In describing the nuisance erected by so pestilential a manufactory, by the construction of so infamous a brothel, by digging a night-cellar for such thieves, murderers, and house-breakers, as never infested the world, I am so far from aggravating, that I have fallen infinitely short of the evil. No man who has attended to the particulars of what has been done in France, and combined them with the principles there asserted, can possibly doubt it. When I compare with this great cause of nations, the trifling points of honour, the still more contemptible points of interest, the light ceremonies, and undefinable punctilios, the disputes about precedency, the lowering or the hoisting of a sail, the dealing in a hundred or two of wild cat-skins on the other side of the globe, which have often kindled up the flames of war between nations, I stand astonished at those persons, who do not feel a resentment, not more natural than politic, at the atrocious insults that this monstrous compound offers to the dignity of every nation, and who are not alarmed with what it threatens to their safety.

I have therefore been decidedly of opinion, with our declaration at Whitehall, in the beginning of this war, that the vicinage of Europe had not only a right, but an indispensable duty, and an exigent interest, to denunciate this new work before it had produced the danger we have so sorely felt, and which we shall long feel. The example of what is done by France is too important not to have a vast and extensive influence; and that example, backed with its power, must bear with great force on those who are near it; especially

on those who shall recognize the pretended republic on the principle upon which it now stands. It is not an old structure which you have found as it is, and are not to dispute of the original end and design with which it had been so fashioned. It is a recent wrong, and can plead no prescription. It violates the rights upon which not only the community of France, but those on which all communities are founded. The principles on which they proceed are *general* principles, and are as true in England as in any other country. They, who (though with the purest intentions) recognize the authority of these regicides and robbers upon principle, justify their acts, and establish them as precedents. It is a question not between France and England. It is a question between property and force. The property claims; and its claim has been allowed. The property of the nation is the nation. They, who massacre, plunder, and expel the body of the proprietary, are murderers and robbers. The state, in its essence, must be moral and just: and it may be so, though a tyrant or usurper should be accidentally at the head of it. This is a thing to be lamented: but this notwithstanding, the body of the commonwealth may remain in all its integrity and be perfectly sound in its composition. The present case is different. It is not a revolution in government. It is not the victory of party over party. It is a destruction and decomposition of the whole society; which never can be made of right by any faction, however powerful, nor without terrible consequences to all about it, both in the act and in the example. This pretended republic is founded in crimes, and exists by wrong and robbery; and wrong and robbery, far from a title to anything, is war with mankind. To be at peace with robbery is to be an accomplice with it.

Mere locality does not constitute a body politic. Had Cade and his gang got possession of London, they would not have been the lord mayor, aldermen, and common council. The body politic of France existed in the majesty of its throne, in the dignity of its

nobility, in the honour of its gentry, in the sanctity of its clergy, in the reverence of its magistracy, in the weight and consideration due to its landed property in the several bailliages, in the respect due to its movable substance represented by the corporations of the kingdom. All these particular *moleculae* united form the great mass of what is truly the body politic in all countries. They are so many deposits and receptacles of justice; because they can only exist by justice. Nation is a moral essence, not a geographical arrangement, or a denomination of the nomenclator. France, though out of her territorial possession, exists; because the sole possible claimant, I mean the proprietary, and the government to which the proprietary adheres, exists and claims. God forbid, that if you were expelled from your house by ruffians and assassins, that I should call the material walls, doors and windows of ———, the ancient and honourable family of ———. Am I to transfer to the intruders, who, not content to turn you out naked to the world, would rob you of your very name, all the esteem and respect I owe to you? The regicides in France are not France. France is out of her bounds, but the kingdom is the same.

To illustrate my opinions on this subject, let us suppose a case, which, after what has happened, we cannot think absolutely impossible, though the augury is to be abominated, and the event deprecated with our most ardent prayers. Let us suppose, then, that our gracious sovereign was sacrilegiously murdered; his exemplary queen, at the head of the matronage of this land, murdered in the same manner; that those princesses, whose beauty and modest elegance are the ornaments of the country, and who are the leaders and patterns of the ingenuous youth of their sex, were put to a cruel and ignominious death, with hundreds of others, mothers and daughters, ladies of the first distinction;—that the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, princes the hope and pride of the nation, with all their brethren, were forced to fly from

the knives of assassins—that the whole body of our excellent clergy were either massacred or robbed of all, and transported—the Christian religion, in all its denominations, forbidden and persecuted; the law totally, fundamentally, and in all its parts, destroyed—the judges put to death by revolutionary tribunals—the peers and commons robbed to the last acre of their estates; massacred if they stayed, or obliged to seek life in flight, in exile and in beggary—that the whole landed property should share the very same fate—that every military and naval officer of honour and rank, almost to a man, should be placed in the same description of confiscation and exile—that the principal merchants and bankers should be drawn out, as from a hen-coop, for slaughter—that the citizens of our greatest and most flourishing cities, when the hand and the machinery of the hangman were not found sufficient, should have been collected in the public squares, and massacred by thousands with cannon;—if three hundred thousand others should have been doomed to a situation worse than death in noisome and pestilential prisons;—in such a case, is it in the faction of robbers I am to look for my country? Would this be the England that you and I, and even strangers, admired, honoured, loved, and cherished? Would not the exiles of England alone be my government and my fellow-citizens? Would not their places of refuge be my temporary country? Would not all my duties and all my affections be there, and there only? Should I consider myself as a traitor to my country, and deserving of death, if I knocked at the door and heart of every potentate in Christendom to succour my friends, and to avenge them on their enemies? Could I, in any way, show myself more a patriot? What should I think of those potentates who insulted their suffering brethren; who treated them as vagrants, or at least as mendicants; and could find no allies, no friends, but in regicide murderers and robbers? What ought I to think and feel, if, being geographers instead of kings, they

recognized the desolated cities, the wasted fields, and the rivers polluted with blood, of this geometrical measurement, as the honourable member of Europe, called England ? In that condition what should we think of Sweden, Denmark, or Holland, or whatever power afforded us a churlish and treacherous hospitality, if they should invite us to join the standard of our king, our laws, and our religion, if they should give us a direct promise of protection—if, after all this, taking advantage of our deplorable situation which left us no choice, they were to treat us as the lowest and vilest of all mercenaries ? If they were to send us far from the aid of our king, and our suffering country, to squander us away in the most pestilential climates for a venal enlargement of their own territories, for the purpose of trucking them, when obtained, with those very robbers and murderers they had called upon us to oppose with our blood ? What would be our sentiments, if in that miserable service we were not to be considered either as English, or as Swedes, Dutch, Danes, but as outcasts of the human race ? Whilst we were fighting those battles of their interest, and as their soldiers, how should we feel if we were to be excluded from all their cartels ? How must we feel, if the pride and flower of the English nobility and gentry, who might escape the pestilential clime, and the devouring sword, should, if taken prisoners, be delivered over as rebel subjects, to be condemned as rebels, as traitors, as the vilest of all criminals, by tribunals formed of Maroon negro slaves, covered over with the blood of their masters, who were made free and organized into judges, for their robberies and murders ? What should we feel under this inhuman, insulting, and barbarous protection of Muscovites, Swedes, or Hollanders ? Should we not obtest Heaven, and whatever justice there is yet on earth ? Oppression makes wise men mad ; but the distemper is still the madness of the wise, which is better that the sobriety of fools. The cry is the voice of sacred misery, exalted, not into wild raving,

but into the sanctified frenzy of prophecy and inspiration—in that bitterness of soul, in that indignation of suffering virtue, in that exaltation of despair, would not persecuted English loyalty cry out, with an awful warning voice, and denounce the destruction that waits on monarchs, who consider fidelity to them as the most degrading of all vices; who suffer it to be punished as the most abominable of all crimes; and who have no respect but for rebels, traitors, regicides, and furious negro slaves, whose crimes have broke their chains? Would not this warm language of high indignation have more of sound reason in it, more of real affection, more of true attachment, than all the lullabies of flatterers, who would hush monarchs to sleep in the arms of death? Let them be well convinced that, if ever this example should prevail in its whole extent, it will have its full operation. Whilst kings stand firm on their base, though under that base there is a sure-wrought mine, there will not be wanting to their levees a single person of those who are attached to their fortune, and not to their persons or cause; but hereafter none will support a tottering throne. Some will fly for fear of being crushed under the ruin, some will join in making it. They will seek in the destruction of royalty, fame, and power, and wealth, and the homage of kings, with *Reubel*, with *Carnot*, with *Revelliere*, and with the *Merlins* and the *Talliens*, rather than suffer exile and beggary with the *Condés*, or the *Broglios*, the *Castries*, the *D'Avrais*, the *Serrents*, the *Cazalés*, and the long line of loyal, suffering, patriot nobility, or to be butchered with the oracles and the victims of the laws, the *D'Ormesons*, the *D'Espremenils*, and the *Malesherbes*. This example we shall give, if instead of adhering to our fellows in a cause which is an honour to us all, we abandon the lawful government and lawful corporate body of France, to hunt for a shameful and ruinous fraternity, with this odious usurpation that disgraces civilized society and the human race.

And is, then, example nothing? It is everything.

Example is the school of mankind, and they will learn at no other. This war is a war against that example. It is not a war for Louis XVIII, or even for the property, virtue, fidelity of France. It is a war for George III, for Francis II, and for all the dignity, property, honour, virtue, and religion of England, of Germany, and of all nations.

I know that all I have said of the systematic unsociability of this new-invented species of republic, and the impossibility of preserving peace, is answered by asserting that the scheme of manners, morals, and even of maxims and principles of state, is of no weight in a question of peace or war between communities. This doctrine is supported by example. The case of Algiers is cited, with a hint, as if it were the stronger case. I should take no notice of this sort of inducement, if I had found it only where first it was. I do not want respect for those from whom I first heard it—but having no controversy at present with them, I only think it not amiss to rest on it a little, as I find it adopted with much more of the same kind, by several of those on whom such reasoning had formerly made no apparent impression. If it had no force to prevent us from submitting to this necessary war, it furnishes no better ground for our making an unnecessary and ruinous peace.

This analogical argument drawn from the case of Algiers would lead us a good way. The fact is, we ourselves with a little cover, others more directly, pay a *tribute* to the republic of Algiers. Is it meant to reconcile us to the payment of a *tribute* to the French republic? That this, with other things more ruinous, will be demanded hereafter, I little doubt; but for the present, this will not be avowed—though our minds are to be gradually prepared for it. In truth, the arguments from this case are worth little, even to those who approve the buying an Algerine forbearance of piracy. There are many things which men do not approve, that they must do to avoid a greater evil. To argue from thence that they are to

act in the same manner in all cases, is turning necessity into a law. Upon what is matter of prudence, the argument concludes the contrary way. Because we have done one humiliating act, we ought with infinite caution to admit more acts of the same nature, lest humiliation should become our habitual state. Matters of prudence are under the dominion of circumstances, and not of logical analogies. It is absurd to take it otherwise.

I, for one, do more than doubt the policy of this kind of convention with Algiers. On those who think as I do the argument *ad hominem* can make no sort of impression. I know something of the constitution and composition of this very extraordinary republic. It has a constitution, I admit, similar to the present tumultuous military tyranny of France, by which a handful of obscure ruffians domineer over a fertile country and a brave people. For the composition, too, I admit the Algerine community resembles that of France; being formed out of the very scum, scandal, disgrace, and pest, of the Turkish Asia. The grand seignior, to disburden the country, suffers the dey to recruit in his dominions the corps of janissaries, or asaphs, which form the directory and council of elders of the African republic one and indivisible. But notwithstanding this resemblance, which I allow, I never shall so far injure the janissarian republic of Algiers, as to put it in comparison for every sort of crime, turpitude, and oppression, with the Jacobin republic of Paris. There is no question with me to which of the two I should choose to be a neighbour or a subject. But situated as I am, I am in no danger of becoming to Algiers either the one or the other. It is not so in my relation to the atheistical fanatics of France. I *am* their neighbour; I *may* become their subject. Have the gentlemen, who borrowed this happy parallel, no idea of the different conduct to be held with regard to the very same evil at an immense distance, and when it is at your door? when its power is enormous, as when it is comparatively as feeble as

its distance is remote? when there is a barrier of language and usages, which prevents corruption through certain old correspondences and habitudes, from the contagion of the horrible novelties that are introduced into everything else? I can contemplate, without dread, a royal or a national tiger on the borders of Pegu. I can look at him, with an easy curiosity, as prisoner within bars in the menagerie of the Tower. But if, by habeas corpus, or otherwise, he was to come into the lobby of the House of Commons whilst your door was open, any of you would be more stout than wise, who would not gladly make your escape out of the back windows. I certainly should dread more from a wild-cat in my bed-chamber, than from all the lions that roar in the deserts behind Algiers. But in this parallel it is the cat that is at a distance, and the lions and tigers that are in our ante-chambers and our lobbies. Algiers is not near; Algiers is not powerful; Algiers is not our neighbour; Algiers is not infectious. Algiers, whatever it may be, is an old creation; and we have good data to calculate all the mischief to be apprehended from it. When I find Algiers transferred to Calais, I will tell you what I think of that point. In the meantime, the case quoted from the Algerine reports will not apply as authority. We shall put it out of court; and so far as that goes, let the counsel for the Jacobin peace take nothing by their motion.

When we voted, as you and I did, with many more whom you and I respect and love, to resist this enemy, we were providing for dangers that were direct, home-pressing, and not remote, contingent, uncertain, and formed upon loose analogies. We judged of the danger with which we were menaced by Jacobin France, from the whole tenor of her conduct; not from one or two doubtful or detached acts or expressions. I not only concurred in the idea of combining with Europe in this war, but to the best of my power even stimulated ministers to that conjunction of interests and of efforts. I joined them with all my

soul, on the principles contained in that manly and masterly state-paper, which I have two or three times referred to[1], and may still more frequently hereafter. The diplomatic collection never was more enriched than with this piece. The historic facts justify every stroke of the master. 'Thus painters write their names at Co.'

Various persons may concur in the same measure on various grounds. They may be various, without being contrary to, or exclusive of each other. I thought the insolent, unprovoked aggression of the regicide upon our ally of Holland, a good ground of war. I think his manifest attempt to overturn the balance of Europe, a good ground of war. As a good ground of war, I consider his declaration of war on his majesty and his kingdom. But though I have taken all these to my aid, I consider them as nothing more than as a sort of evidence to indicate the treasonable mind within. Long before their acts of aggression, and their declaration of war, the faction in France had assumed a form, had adopted a body of principles and maxims, and had regularly and systematically acted on them, by which she virtually had put herself in a posture, which was in itself a declaration of war against mankind.

It is said by the Directory in their several manifestoes that we of the people are tumultuous for peace; and that ministers pretend negotiation to amuse us. This they have learned from the language of many amongst ourselves, whose conversations have been one main cause of whatever extent the opinion for peace with regicide may be. But I, who think the ministers unfortunately to be but too serious in their proceedings, find myself obliged to say a little more on this subject of the popular opinion.

Before our opinions are quoted against ourselves, it is proper that, from our serious deliberation, they may be worth quoting. It is without reason we praise

[1] Declaration, Whitehall, October 29, 1793.

the wisdom of our constitution, in putting under the discretion of the crown the awful trust of war and peace, if the ministers of the crown virtually return it again into our hands. The trust was placed there as a sacred deposit, to secure us against popular rashness in plunging into wars, and against the effects of popular dismay, disgust, or lassitude, in getting out of them as imprudently as we might first engage in them. To have no other measure in judging of those great objects than our momentary opinions and desires, is to throw us back upon that very democracy which, in this part, our constitution was formed to avoid.

It is no excuse at all for a minister, who at our desire takes a measure contrary to our safety, that it is our own act. He who does not stay the hand of suicide, is guilty of murder. On our part, I say, that to be instructed, is not to be degraded or enslaved. Information is an advantage to us; and we have a right to demand it. He that is bound to act in the dark cannot be said to act freely. When it appears evident to our governors that our desires and our interests are at variance, they ought not to gratify the former at the expense of the latter. Statesmen are placed on an eminence that they may have a larger horizon than we can possibly command. They have a whole before them, which we can contemplate only in the parts, and often without the necessary relations. Ministers are not only our natural rulers but our natural guides. Reason clearly and manfully delivered, has in itself a mighty force: but reason in the mouth of legal authority, is, I may fairly say, irresistible.

I admit that reason of state will not, in many circumstances, permit the disclosure of the true ground of a public proceeding. In that case silence is manly and it is wise. It is fair to call for trust when the principle of reason itself suspends its public use. I take the distinction to be this: the ground of a particular measure, making a part of a plan, it is rarely proper to divulge; all the broader grounds of policy, on

which the general plan is to be adopted, ought as rarely to be concealed. They, who have not the whole cause before them, call them politicians, call them people, call them what you will, are no judges. The difficulties of the case, as well as its fair side, ought to be presented. This ought to be done; and it is all that can be done. When we have our true situation distinctly presented to us, if then we resolve, with a blind and headlong violence, to resist the admonitions of our friends, and to cast ourselves into the hands of our potent and irreconcilable foes, then, and not till then, the ministers stand acquitted before God and man, for whatever may come.

Lamenting, as I do, that the matter has not had so full and free a discussion as it requires, I mean to omit none of the points which seem to me necessary for consideration, previous to an arrangement which is for ever to decide the form and the fate of Europe. In the course, therefore, of what I shall have the honour to address to you, I propose the following questions to your serious thought:—1. Whether the present system, which stands for a government in France, be such as in peace and war affects the neighbouring states in a manner different from the internal government that formerly prevailed in that country?—2. Whether that system, supposing its views hostile to other nations, possesses any means of being hurtful to them peculiar to itself?—3. Whether there has been lately such a change in France, as to alter the nature of its system, or its effect upon other powers?—4. Whether any public declarations or engagements exist, on the part of the allied powers, which stand in the way of a treaty of peace, which supposes the right and confirms the power of the regicide faction in France?—5. What the state of the other powers of Europe will be with respect to each other, and their colonies, on the conclusion of a regicide peace?—6. Whether we are driven to the absolute necessity of making that kind of peace?

These heads of inquiry will enable us to make the

application of the several matters of fact and topics of argument, that occur in this vast discussion, to certain fixed principles. I do not mean to confine myself to the order in which they stand. I shall discuss them in such a manner as shall appear to me the best adapted for showing their mutual bearings and relations. Here then I close the public matter of my letter; but before I have done, let me say one word in apology for myself.

In wishing this nominal peace not to be precipitated, I am sure no man living is less disposed to blame the present ministry than I am. Some of my oldest friends (and I wish I could say it of more of them) make a part in that ministry. There are some indeed, 'whom my dim eyes in vain explore'. In my mind, a greater calamity could not have fallen on the public than the exclusion of one of them. But I drive away that, with other melancholy thoughts. A great deal ought to be said upon that subject, or nothing. As to the distinguished persons to whom my friends who remain, are joined, if the benefits, nobly and generously conferred, ought to procure good wishes, they are entitled to my best vows; and they have them all. They have administered to me the only consolation I am capable of receiving, which is to know that no individual will suffer by my thirty years' service to the public. If things should give us the comparative happiness of a struggle, I shall be found, I was going to say fighting (that would be foolish), but dying by the side of Mr. Pitt. I must add that if anything defensive in our domestic system can possibly save us from the disasters of a regicide peace, he is the man to save us. If the finances in such a case can be repaired, he is the man to repair them. If I should lament any of his acts, it is only when they appear to me to have no resemblance to acts of his. But let him not have a confidence in himself, which no human abilities can warrant. His abilities are fully equal (and that is to say much for any man) to those which are opposed to him. But if we look to him as our

security against the consequences of a regicide peace, let us be assured that a regicide peace and a constitutional ministry are terms that will not agree. With a regicide peace the king cannot long have a minister to serve him, nor the minister a king to serve. If the Great Disposer, in reward of the royal and the private virtues of our sovereign, should call him from the calamitous spectacles, which will attend a state of amity with regicide, his successor will surely see them, unless the same Providence greatly anticipates the course of nature. Thinking thus (and not, as I conceive, on light grounds), I dare not flatter the reigning sovereign, nor any minister he has or can have, nor his successor apparent, nor any of those who may be called to serve him, with what appears to me a false state of their situation. We cannot have them and that peace together.

I do not forget that there had been a considerable difference between several of our friends (with my insignificant self), and the great man at the head of ministry, in an early stage of these discussions. But I am sure there was a period in which we agreed better in the danger of a Jacobin existence in France. At one time he and all Europe seemed to feel it. But why am not I converted with so many great powers, and so many great ministers ? It is because I am old and slow.—I am in this year, 1796, only where all the powers of Europe were in 1793. I cannot move with this procession of the equinoxes, which is preparing for us the return of some very old, I am afraid no golden era, or the commencement of some new era that must be denominated from some new metal. In this crisis I must hold my tongue, or I must speak with freedom. Falsehood and delusion are allowed in no case whatever : but, as in the exercise of all the virtues, there is an economy of truth. It is a sort of temperance, by which a man speaks truth with measure that he may speak it the longer. But as the same rules do not hold in all cases—what would be right for you, who may presume on a series of years before

you, would have no sense for me, who cannot, without absurdity, calculate on six months of life. What I say, I *must* say at once. Whatever I write is in its nature testamentary. It may have the weakness, but it has the sincerity of a dying declaration. For the few days I have to linger here, I am removed completely from the busy scene of the world; but I hold myself to be still responsible for everything that I have done whilst I continued on the place of action. If the rawest tyro in politics has been influenced by the authority of my grey hairs, and led by anything in my speeches, or my writings, to enter into this war, he has a right to call upon me to know why I have changed my opinions, or why, when those I voted with have adopted better notions, I persevere in exploded error?

When I seem not to acquiesce in the acts of those I respect in every degree short of superstition, I am obliged to give my reasons fully. I cannot set my authority against their authority. But to exert reason is not to revolt against authority. Reason and authority do not move in the same parallel. That reason is an *amicus curiae* who speaks *de plano*, not *pro tribulani*. It is a friend who makes a useful suggestion to the court, without questioning its jurisdiction. Whilst he acknowledges its competence, he promotes its efficiency. I shall pursue the plan I have chalked out in my letters that follow this.

LETTER II

ON THE GENIUS AND CHARACTER OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AS IT REGARDS OTHER NATIONS. 1796.

My dear Sir,

I closed my first letter with serious matter, and I hope it has employed your thoughts. The system of peace must have a reference to the system of the war. On that ground, I must therefore again recall your mind to our original opinions, which time and events have not taught me to vary.

My ideas and my principle led me in this contest to encounter France, not as a state but as a faction. The vast territorial extent of that country, its immense population, its riches of production, its riches of commerce and convention—the whole aggregate mass of what, in ordinary cases, constitutes the force of a state, to me were but objects of secondary consideration. They might be balanced; and they have been often more than balanced. Great as these things are, they are not what make the faction formidable. It is the faction that makes them truly dreadful. That faction is the evil spirit that possesses the body of France; that informs it as a soul; that stamps upon its ambition, and upon all its pursuits, a characteristic mark, which strongly distinguishes them from the same general passions, and the same general views, in other men and in other communities. It is that spirit which inspires into them a new, a pernicious, a desolating activity. Constituted as France was ten years ago, it was not in that France to shake, to shatter, and to

overwhelm Europe in the manner that we behold. A sure destruction impends over those infatuated princes, who, in the conflict with this new and unheard-of power, proceed as if they were engaged in a war that bore a resemblance to their former contest; or that they can make peace in the spirit of their former arrangements of pacification. Here the beaten path is the very reverse of the safe road.

As to me, I was always steadily of opinion that this disorder was not in its nature intermittent. I conceived that the contest, once begun, could not be laid down again, to be resumed at our discretion; but that our first struggle with this evil would also be our last. I never thought we could make peace with the system; because it was not for the sake of an object we pursued in rivalry with each other, but with the system itself that we were at war. As I understood the matter, we were at war not with its conduct, but with its existence; convinced that its existence and its hostility were the same.

The faction is not local or territorial. It is a general evil. Where it least appears in action, it is still full of life. In its sleep it recruits its strength, and prepares its exertion. Its spirit lies deep in the corruption of our common nature. The social order which restrains it feeds it. It exists in every country in Europe; and among all orders of men in every country, who look up to France as to a common head. The centre is there. The circumference is the world of Europe wherever the race of Europe may be settled. Everywhere else the faction is militant; in France it is triumphant. In France is the bank of deposit, and the bank of circulation, of all the pernicious principles that are forming in every state. It will be a folly scarcely deserving of pity, and too mischievous for contempt, to think of restraining it in any other country whilst it is predominant there. War, instead of being the cause of its force, has suspended its operation. It has given a reprieve, at least, to the Christian world.

The true nature of a Jacobin war in the beginning was, by most of the Christian powers, felt, acknowledged, and even in the most precise manner declared. In the joint manifesto, published by the Emperor and the King of Prussia, on the 4th of August, 1792, it is expressed in the clearest terms, and on principles, which could not fail, if they had adhered to them, of classing those monarchs with the first benefactors of mankind. This manifesto was published, as they themselves express it, 'to lay open to the present generation, as well as to posterity, their motives, their intentions, and the *disinterestedness* of their personal views; taking up arms for the purpose of preserving social and political order amongst all civilized nations, and to secure to *each* state its religion, happiness, independence, territories, and real constitution'.— 'On this ground, they hoped that all empires, and all states would be unanimous; and, becoming the firm guardians of the happiness of mankind, that they could not fail to unite their efforts to rescue a numerous nation from its own fury, to preserve Europe from the return of barbarism, and the universe from the subversion and anarchy with which it was threatened.' The whole of that noble performance ought to be read at the first meeting of any congress, which may assemble for the purpose of pacification. In that peace 'these powers expressly renounce all views of personal aggrandizement,' and confine themselves to objects worthy of so generous, so heroic, and so perfectly wise and politic an enterprise. It was to the principles of this confederation and to no other, that we wished our sovereign and our country to accede, as a part of the commonwealth of Europe. To these principles, with some trifling exceptions and limitations, they did fully accede[1]. And all our friends who took office acceded to the ministry (whether wisely or not) as I always understood the matter, on the faith and on the principles of that declaration.

[1] See Declaration, Whitehall, October 29, 1793.

As long as these powers flattered themselves that the menace of force would produce the effect of force, they acted on those declarations: but when their menaces failed of success, their efforts took a new direction. It did not appear to them that virtue and heroism ought to be purchased by millions of rix-dollars. It is a dreadful truth, but it is a truth that cannot be concealed; in ability, in dexterity, in the distinctness of their views, the Jacobins are our superiors. They saw the thing right from the very beginning. Whatever were the first motives to the war among politicians, they saw that in its spirit, and for its objects, it was a *civil war*; and as such they pursued it. It is a war between the partisans of the ancient, civil, moral, and political order of Europe against a sect of fanatical and ambitious atheists which means to change them all. It is not France extending a foreign empire over other nations: it is a sect aiming at universal empire, and beginning with the conquest of France. The leaders of that sect secured the *centre of Europe*; and that secured, they know, that whatever might be the event of battles and sieges, their *cause* was victorious. Whether its territory had a little more or a little less peeled from its surface, or whether an island or two was detached from its commerce, to them was of little moment. The conquest of France was a glorious acquisition. That once well laid as a basis of empire, opportunities never could be wanting to regain or to replace what had been lost, and dreadfully to avenge themselves on the faction of their adversaries.

They saw it was a *civil war*. It was their business to persuade their adversaries that it ought to be a *foreign* war. The Jacobins everywhere set up a cry against the new crusade; and they intrigued with effect in the cabinet, in the field, and in every private society in Europe. Their task was not difficult. The condition of princes, and sometimes of first ministers too, is to be pitied. The creatures of the desk, and the creatures of favour, had no relish for the principles of the manifestoes. They promised no governments,

no regiments, no revenues from whence emoluments might arise by perquisite or by grant. In truth, the tribe of vulgar politicians are the lowest of our species. There is no trade so vile and mechanical as government in their hands. Virtue is not their habit. They are out of themselves in any course of conduct recommended only by conscience and glory. A large, liberal, and prospective view of the interests of states passes with them for romance; and the principles that recommend it for the wanderings of a disordered imagination. The calculators compute them out of their senses. The jesters and buffoons shame them out of everything grand and elevated. Littleness in object and in means, to them appears soundness and sobriety. They think there is nothing worth pursuit, but that which they can handle; which they can measure with a two-foot rule; which they can tell upon ten fingers.

Without the principles of the Jacobins, perhaps without any principles at all, they played the game of that faction. There was a beaten road before them. The powers of Europe were armed; France had always appeared dangerous; the war was easily diverted from France as a faction, to France as a state. The princes were easily taught to slide back into their old, habitual course of politics. They were easily led to consider the flames that were consuming France, not as a warning to protect their own buildings (which were without any party wall, and linked by a contignation into the edifice of France), but as a happy occasion for pillaging the goods, and for carrying off the materials of their neighbour's house. Their provident fears were changed into avaricious hopes. They carried on their new designs without seeming to abandon the principles of their old policy. They pretended to seek, or they flattered themselves that they sought, in the accession of new fortresses, and new territories, a *defensive* security. But the security wanted was against a kind of power, which was not so truly dangerous in its fortresses nor in its territories, as in its spirit and its

principles. They aimed, or pretended to aim, at *defending* themselves against a danger, from which there can be no security in any *defensive* plan. If armies and fortresses were a defence against Jacobinism, Louis XVI would this day reign a powerful monarch over a happy people.

This error obliged them, even in their offensive operations, to adopt a plan of war, against the success of which there was something little short of mathematical demonstration. They refused to take any step which might strike at the heart of affairs. They seemed unwilling to wound the enemy in any vital part. They acted through the whole, as if they really wished the conservation of the Jacobin power, as what might be more favourable than the lawful government to the attainment of the petty objects they looked for. They always kept on the circumference; and the wider and remoter the circle was, the more eagerly they chose it as their sphere of action in this centrifugal war. The plan they pursued in its nature demanded great length of time. In its execution, they, who went the nearest way to work, were obliged to cover an incredible extent of country. It left to the enemy every means of destroying this extended line of weakness. Ill success in any part was sure to defeat the effect of the whole. This is true of Austria. It is still more true of England. On this false plan, even good fortune, by further weakening the victor, put him but the further off from his object.

As long as there was any appearance of success, the spirit of aggrandizement, and consequently the spirit of mutual jealousy, seized upon all the coalesced powers. Some sought an accession of territory at the expense of France, some at the expense of each other, some at the expense of third parties; and when the vicissitude of disaster took its turn, they found common distress a treacherous bond of faith and friendship.

The greatest skill conducting the greatest military apparatus has been employed; but it has been worse

than uselessly employed, through the false policy of the war. The operations of the field suffered by the errors of the cabinet. If the same spirit continues when peace is made, the peace will fix and perpetuate all the errors of the war; because it will be made upon the same false principle. What has been lost in the field, in the field may be regained. An arrangement of peace in its nature is a permanent settlement: it is the effect of counsel and deliberation, and not of fortuitous events. If built upon a basis fundamentally erroneous, it can only be retrieved by some of those unforeseen dispensations, which the all-wise but mysterious Governor of the world sometimes interposes, to snatch nations from ruin. It would not be pious error, but mad and impious presumption, for any one to trust in an unknown order of dispensations, in defiance of the rules of prudence, which are formed upon the known march of the ordinary providence of God.

It was not of that sort of war that I was amongst the least considerable, but amongst the most zealous advisers; and it is not by the sort of peace now talked of, that I wished it concluded. It would answer no great purpose to enter into the particular errors of the war. The whole has been but one error. It was but nominally a war of alliance. As the combined powers pursued it, there was nothing to hold an alliance together. There could be no tie of *honour*, in a society for pillage. There could be no tie of a common *interest* where the object did not offer such a division amongst the parties as could well give them a warm concern in the gains of each other, or could indeed form such a body of equivalents, as might make one of them willing to abandon a separate object of his ambition for the gratification of any other member of the alliance. The partition of Poland offered an object of spoil in which the parties *might* agree. They were circumjacent, and each might take a portion convenient to his own territory. They might dispute about the value of their several shares, but

the contiguity to each of the demandants always furnished the means of an adjustment. Though hereafter the world will have cause to rue this iniquitous measure, and they most who were most concerned in it, for the moment, there was wherewithal in the object to preserve peace amongst confederates in wrong. But the spoil of France did not afford the same facilities for accommodation. What might satisfy the house of Austria in a Flemish frontier afforded no equivalent to tempt the cupidity of the King of Prussia. What might be desired by Great Britain in the West Indies, must be coldly and remotely, if at all, felt as an interest at Vienna; and it would be felt as something worse than a negative interest at Madrid. Austria, long possessed with unwise and dangerous designs on Italy, could not be very much in earnest about the conservation of the old patrimony of the house of Savoy; and Sardinia, who owed to an Italian force all her means of shutting out France from Italy, of which she has been supposed to hold the key, would not purchase the means of strength upon one side by yielding it on the other. She would not readily give the possession of Novara for the hope of Savoy. No continental power was willing to lose any of its continental objects for the increase of the naval power of Great Britain; and Great Britain would not give up any of the objects she sought for as the means of an increase to her naval power, to further their aggrandizement.

The moment this war came to be considered as a war merely of profit, the actual circumstances are such that it never could become really a war of alliance. Nor can the peace be a peace of alliance, until things are put upon their right bottom.

I don't find it denied that, when a treaty is entered into for peace, a demand will be made on the regicides to surrender a great part of their conquests on the Continent. Will they, in the present state of the war, make that surrender without an equivalent? This continental cession must of course be made in

favour of that party in the alliance, that has suffered losses. That party has nothing to furnish towards an equivalent. What equivalent, for instance, has Holland to offer, who has lost her all? What equivalent can come from the emperor, every part of whose territories contiguous to France is already within the pale of the regicide dominions? What equivalent has Sardinia to offer for Savoy and for Nice, I may say, for her whole being? What has she taken from the faction of France? she has lost very near her all; and she has gained nothing. What equivalent has Spain to give? Alas! she has already paid for her own ransom the fund of equivalent, and a dreadful equivalent it is, to England and to herself. But I put Spain out of the question; she is a province of the Jacobin empire, and she must make peace or war according to the orders she receives from the directory of assassins. In effect and substance, her crown is a fief of regicide.

Whence, then, can the compensation be demanded? Undoubtedly from that power which alone has made some conquests. That power is England. Will the allies then give away their ancient patrimony, that England may keep islands in the West Indies? They never can protract the war in good earnest for that object; nor can they act in concert with us, in our refusal to grant anything towards their redemption. In that case we are thus situated. Either we must give Europe, bound hand and foot to France; or we must quit the West Indies without any one object, great or small, towards indemnity and security. I repeat it, without any advantage whatever; because, supposing that our conquest could comprise all that France ever possessed in the tropical America, it never can amount in any fair estimation to a fair equivalent for Holland, for the Austrian Netherlands, for the lower Germany, that is, for the whole ancient kingdom or circle of Burgundy, now under the yoke of regicide. to say nothing of almost all Italy under the same barbarous domination. If we treat in the present

situation of things, we have nothing in our hands that can redeem Europe. Nor is the emperor, as I have observed, more rich in the funds of equivalents.

If we look to our stock in the eastern world, our most valuable and systematic acquisitions are made in that quarter. Is it from France they are made? France has but one or two contemptible factories subsisting by the offal of the private fortunes of English individuals to support them, in any part of India. I look on the taking of the Cape of Good Hope as the securing of a post of great moment. It does honour to those who planned, and to those who executed, that enterprise; but I speak of it always as comparatively good; as good as anything can be in a scheme of war that repels us from a centre, and employs all our forces where nothing can be finally decisive. But giving, as I freely give, every possible credit to these eastern conquests, I ask one question,—on whom are they made? It is evident, that if we can keep our eastern conquests, we keep them not at the expense of France, but at the expense of Holland our *ally*; of Holland the immediate cause of the war, the nation whom we had undertaken to protect, and not of the republic which it was our business to destroy. If we return the African and the Asiatic conquests, we put them into the hands of a nominal state (to that Holland is reduced) unable to retain them; and which will virtually leave them under the direction of France. If we withhold them, Holland declines still more as a state. She loses so much carrying trade and that means of keeping up the small degree of naval power she holds; for which policy alone, and not for any commercial gain, she maintains the Cape, or any settlement beyond it. In that case, resentment, faction, and even necessity, will throw her more and more into the power of the new, mischievous republic. But on the probable state of Holland, I shall say more, when in this correspondence I come to talk over with you the state in which any sort of Jacobin peace will leave all Europe.

So far as to the East Indies.

As to the West Indies, indeed as to either, if we look for matter of exchange in order to ransom Europe, it is easy to show that we have taken a terrible roundabout road. I cannot conceive, even if, for the sake of holding conquests there, we should refuse to redeem Holland, and the Austrian Netherlands, and the hither Germany, that Spain, merely as she is Spain (and forgetting that the regicide ambassador governs at Madrid), will see, with perfect satisfaction, Great Britain sole mistress of the isles. In truth it appears to me that, when we come to balance our account, we shall find in the proposed peace only the pure, simple, and unendowed charms of Jacobin amity. We shall have the satisfaction of knowing that no blood or treasure has been spared by the allies for support of the regicide system. We shall reflect at leisure on one great truth, that it was ten times more easy totally to destroy the system itself, than, when established, it would be to reduce its power, and that this republic, most formidable abroad, was of all things the weakest at home; that her frontier was terrible, her interior feeble; that it was matter of choice to attack her where she is invincible, and to spare her where she was ready to dissolve by her own internal disorders. We shall reflect that our plan was good neither for offence nor defence.

It would not be at all difficult to prove that an army of a hundred thousand men, horse, foot, and artillery, might have been employed against the enemy on the very soil which he has usurped, at a far less expense than has been squandered away upon tropical adventures. In these adventures it was not an enemy we had to vanquish, but a cemetery to conquer. In carrying on the war in the West Indies, the hostile sword is merciful; the country in which we engage is the dreadful enemy. There the European conqueror finds a cruel defeat in the very fruits of his success. Every advantage is but a new demand on England for recruits to the West Indian grave. In a West

India war, the regicides have, for their troops, a race of fierce barbarians, to whom the poisoned air, in which our youth inhale certain death, is salubrity and life. To them the climate is the surest and most faithful of allies.

Had we carried on the war on the side of France which looks towards the Channel or the Atlantic, we should have attacked our enemy on his weak and unarmed side. We should not have to reckon on the loss of a man who did not fall in battle. We should have an ally in the heart of the country, who, to our hundred thousand, would at one time have added eighty thousand men at the least, and all animated by principle, by enthusiasm, and by vengeance; motives which secured them to the cause in a very different manner from some of those allies whom we subsidized with millions. This ally (or rather this principle in the war), by the confession of the regicide himself, was more formidable to him than all his other foes united. Warring there, we should have led our arms to the capital of Wrong. Defeated, we could not fail (proper precautions taken) of a sure retreat. Stationary, and only supporting the royalists, an impenetrable barrier, an impregnable rampart, would have been formed between the enemy and his naval power. We are probably the only nation who have declined to act against an enemy, when it might have been done in his own country; and who having an armed, a powerful, and a long victorious ally in that country, declined all effectual co-operation, and suffered him to perish for want of support. On the plan of a war in France, every advantage that our allies might obtain would be doubled in its effect. Disasters on the one side might have a fair chance of being compensated by victories on the other. Had we brought the main of our force to bear upon that quarter, all the operations of that British and imperial crowns would have been combined. The war would have had system, correspondence, and a certain direction. But as the war has

been pursued, the operations of the two crowns have not the smallest degree of mutual bearing or relation.

Had acquisitions in the West Indies been our object, on success in France, everything reasonable in those remote parts might be demanded with decorum, and justice, and a sure effect. Well might we call for a recompense in America, for those services to which Europe owed its safety. Having abandoned this obvious policy connected with principle, we have seen the regicide power taking the reverse course, and making real conquests in the West Indies, to which all our dear-bought advantages (if we could hold them) are mean and contemptible. The noblest island within the tropics, worth all that we possess put together, is, by the vassal Spaniard, delivered into her hands. The island of Hispaniola (of which we have but one poor corner, by a slippery hold) is perhaps equal to England in extent, and in fertility is far superior. The part possessed by Spain of that great island, made for the seat and centre of a tropical empire, was not improved to be sure, as the French division had been, before it was systematically destroyed by the cannibal republic ; but it is not only the far larger, but the far more salubrious and more fertile part.

It was delivered into the hands of the barbarians without, as I can find, any public reclamation on our part, not only in contravention to one of the fundamental treaties that compose the public law of Europe, but in defiance of the fundamental colonial policy of Spain herself. This part of the treaty of Utrecht was made for great general ends unquestionably; but whilst it provided for those general ends, it was in affirmance of that particular policy. It was not to injure but to save Spain by making a settlement of her estate, which prohibited her to alienate to France. It is her policy not to see the balance of West Indian power overturned by France or by Great Britain. Whilst the monarchies subsisted, this unprincipled cession was what the influence of the elder branch of the House of Bourbon

never dared to attempt on the younger: but cannibal terror has been more powerful than family influence. The Bourbon monarchy of Spain is united to the republic of France, by what may be truly called the ties of blood.

By this measure the balance of power in the West Indies is totally destroyed. It has followed the balance of power in Europe. It is not alone what shall be left nominally to the assassins that is theirs. Theirs is the whole empire of Spain in America. That stroke finishes all. I should be glad to see our suppliant negotiator in the act of putting his feather to the ear of the Directory, to make it unclinch the fist; and, by his tickling, to charm that rich prize out of the iron grip of robbery and ambition! It does not require much sagacity to discern that no power wholly baffled and defeated in Europe can flatter itself with conquests in the West Indies. In that state of things it can neither keep nor hold. No! It cannot even long make war if the grand bank and deposit of its force is at all in the West Indies. But here a scene opens to my view too important to pass by, perhaps too critical to touch. Is it possible that it should not present itself in all its relations to a mind habituated to consider either war or peace on a large scale, or as one whole?

Unfortunately other ideas have prevailed. A remote, an expensive, a murderous, and, in the end, an unproductive adventure, carried on upon ideas of mercantile knight-errantry, without any of the general wildness of Quixotism, is considered as sound, solid sense; and a war in a wholesome climate, a war at our door, a war directly on the enemy, a war in the heart of his country, a war in concert with an internal ally, and in combination with the external, is regarded as folly and romance.

My dear friend, I hold it impossible that these considerations should have escaped the statesmen on both sides of the water, and on both sides of the House of Commons. How a question of peace can be discussed without having them in view, I cannot imagine. If

you or others see a way out of these difficulties I am happy. I see, indeed, a fund from whence equivalents will be proposed. I see it. But I cannot just now touch it. It is a question of high moment. It opens another Iliad of woes to Europe.

Such is the time proposed for making *a common political peace* to which no one circumstance is propitious. As to the grand principle of the peace, it is left, as if by common consent, wholly out of the question.

Viewing things in this light, I have frequently sunk into a degree of despondency and dejection hardly to be described; yet out of the profoundest depths of this despair, an impulse, which I have in vain endeavoured to resist, has urged me to raise one feeble cry against this unfortunate coalition which is formed at home, in order to make a coalition with France, subversive of the whole ancient order of the world. No disaster of war, no calamity of season, could ever strike me with half the horror which I felt from what is introduced to us by this junction of parties, under the soothing name of peace. We are apt to speak of a low and pusillanimous spirit as the ordinary cause by which dubious wars terminated in humiliating treaties. It is here the direct contrary. I am perfectly astonished at the boldness of character, at the intrepidity of mind, the firmness of nerve, in those who are able with deliberation to face the perils of Jacobin fraternity.

This fraternity is indeed so terrible in its nature, and in its manifest consequences, that there is no way of quieting our apprehensions about it, but by totally putting it out of sight, by substituting for it, through a sort of periphrasis, something of an ambiguous quality, and describing such a connexion under the terms of '*the usual relations of peace and amity.*' By this means the proposed fraternity is hustled in the crowd of those treaties, which imply no change in the public law of Europe, and which do not upon system affect the interior conditions of nations. It is con-

founded with those conventions in which matters of dispute among sovereign powers are compromised, by the taking off a duty more or less, by the surrender of a frontier town, or a disputed district, on the one side or the other; by pactions in which the pretensions of families are settled (as by a conveyancer, making family substitutions and successions), without any alterations in the laws, manners, religion, privileges, and customs, of the cities, or territories, which are the subject of such arrangements.

All this body of old conventions, composing the vast and voluminous collection called the *corps diplomatique*, forms the code or statute law, as the methodized reasonings of the great publicists and jurists form the digest and jurisprudence of the Christian world. In these treasures are to be found the *usual* relations of peace and amity in civilized Europe; and there the relations of ancient France were to be found amongst the rest.

The present system in France is not the ancient France. It is not the ancient France with ordinary ambition and ordinary means. It is not a new power of an old kind. It is a new power of a new species. When such a questionable shape is to be admitted for the first time into the brotherhood of Christendom, it is not a mere matter of idle curiosity to consider how far it is in its nature alliable with the rest, or whether 'the relations of peace and amity' with this new state are likely to be of the same nature with the *usual* relations of the states of Europe.

The revolution in France had the relation of France to other nations as one of its principal objects. The changes made by that revolution were not the better to accommodate her to the old and usual relations, but to produce new ones. The revolution was made, not to make France free, but to make her formidable; not to make her a neighbour, but a mistress; not to make her more observant of laws, but to put her in a condition to impose them. To make France truly formidable it was necessary that France should be

new-modelled. They, who have not followed the train of the late proceedings, have been led by deceitful representations (which deceit made a part in the plan) to conceive that this totally new model of a state, in which nothing escaped a change, was made with a view to its internal relations only.

In the revolution of France two sorts of men were principally concerned in giving a character and determination to its pursuits: the philosophers and the politicians. They took different ways, but they met in the same end. The philosophers had one predominant object, which they pursued with a fanatical fury, that is, the utter extirpation of religion. To that every question of empire was subordinate. They had rather domineer in a parish of atheists, than rule over a Christian world. Their temporal ambition was wholly subservient to their proselytizing spirit, in which they were not exceeded by Mahomet himself.

They who have made but superficial studies in the natural history of the human mind have been taught to look on religious opinions as the only cause of enthusiastic zeal and sectarian propagation. But there is no doctrine whatever, on which men can warm, that is not capable of the very same effect. The social nature of man impels him to propagate his principles, as much as physical impulses urge him to propagate his kind. The passions give zeal and vehemence. The understanding bestows design and system. The whole man moves under the discipline of his opinions. Religion is among the most powerful causes of enthusiasm. When anything concerning it becomes an object of much meditation, it cannot be indifferent to the mind. They who do not love religion, hate it. The rebels to God perfectly abhor the author of their being. They hate him 'with all their heart, with all their mind, with all their soul, and with all their strength.' He never presents himself to their thoughts, but to menace and alarm them. They cannot strike the sun out of Heaven, but they are able to raise a smouldering smoke that obscures him from their

own eyes. Not being able to revenge themselves on God, they have a delight in vicariously defacing, degrading, torturing and tearing in pieces, his image in man. Let no one judge of them by what he has conceived of them, when they were not incorporated, and had no lead. They were then only passengers in a common vehicle. They were then carried along with the general motion of religion in the community, and, without being aware of it, partook of its influence. In that situation, at worst, their nature was left free to counterwork their principles. They despaired of giving any very general currency to their opinions. They considered them as a reserved privilege for the chosen few. But when the possibility of dominion, lead, and propagation presented itself, and that the ambition, which before had so often made them hypocrites, might rather gain than lose by a daring avowal of their sentiments, then the nature of this infernal spirit, which has 'evil for its good,' appeared in its full perfection. Nothing indeed but the possession of some power can with any certainty discover what at the bottom is the true character of any man. Without reading the speeches of Vergniaud, Français of Nantz, Isnard, and some others of that sort, it would not be easy to conceive the passion, rancour, and malice of their tongues and hearts. They worked themselves up to a perfect frenzy against religion and all its professors. They tore the reputation of the clergy to pieces by their infuriated declamations and invectives, before they lacerated their bodies by their massacres. This fanatical atheism left out, we omit the principal feature in the French revolution, and a principal consideration with regard to the effects to be expected from a peace with it.

The other sort of men were the politicians. To them, who had little or not at all reflected on the subject, religion was in itself no object of love or hatred. They disbelieved it, and that was all. Neutral with regard to that object, they took the side which in the present state of things might best answer their

purposes. They soon found that they could not do without the philosophers; and the philosophers soon made them sensible that the destruction of religion was to supply them with means of conquest first at home, and then abroad. The philosophers were the active internal agitators, and supplied the spirit and principles: the second gave the practical direction. Sometimes the one predominated in the composition, sometimes the other. The only difference between them was in the necessity of concealing the general design for a time, and in their dealing with foreign nations; the fanatics going straight forward and openly, the politicians by the surer mode of zigzag. In the course of events this, among other causes, produced fierce and bloody contentions between them. But at the bottom they thoroughly agreed in all the objects of ambition and irreligion, and substantially in all the means of promoting these ends.

Without question, to bring about the unexampled event of the French revolution, the concurrence of a very great number of views and passions was necessary. In that stupendous work, no one principle, by which the human mind may have its faculties at once invigorated and depraved, was left unemployed; but I can speak it to a certainty, and support it by undoubted proofs, that the ruling principle of those who acted in the revolution *as statesmen* had the exterior aggrandizement of France as their ultimate end in the most minute part of the internal changes that were made. We, who of late years have been drawn from an attention to foreign affairs by the importance of our domestic discussions, cannot easily form a conception of the general eagerness of the active and energetic part of the French nation, itself the most active and energetic of all nations, previous to its revolution, upon that subject. I am convinced that the foreign speculators in France, under the old government, were twenty to one of the same description then or now in England; and few of that description there were, who did not emulously set forward the revolution.

The whole official system, particularly in the diplomatic part, the regulars, the irregulars, down to the clerks in office (a corps, without all comparison, more numerous than the same amongst us), co-operated in it. All the intriguers in foreign politics, all the spies, all the intelligencers, actually or late in function, all the candidates for that sort of employment, acted solely upon that principle.

On that system of aggrandizement there was but one mind: but two violent factions arose about the means. The first wished France, diverted from the politics of the Continent, to attend solely to her marine, to feed it by an increase of commerce, and thereby to overpower England on her own element. They contended that, if England were disabled, the powers of the Continent would fall into their proper subordination; that it was England which deranged the whole continental system of Europe. The others, who were by far the more numerous, though not the most outwardly prevalent at court, considered this plan for France as contrary to her genius, her situation, and her natural means. They agreed as to the ultimate object, the reduction of the British power, and, if possible, its naval power; but they considered an ascendancy on the Continent as a necessary preliminary to that undertaking. They argued that the proceedings of England herself had proved the soundness of this policy. That her greatest and ablest statesmen had not considered the support of a continental balance against France as a deviation from the principle of her naval power, but as one of the most effectual modes of carrying it into effect. That such had been her policy ever since the revolution, during which period the naval strength of Great Britain had gone on increasing in the direct ratio of her interference in the politics of the Continent. With much stronger reason ought the politics of France to take the same direction; as well for pursuing objects which her situation would dictate to her, though England had no existence, as for counteracting the politics of that nation; to France

continental politics are primary; they look on them only of secondary consideration to England, and, however necessary, but as means necessary to an end.

What is truly astonishing, the partisans of those two opposite systems were at once prevalent, and at once employed, and in the very same transactions, the one ostensibly, the other secretly, during the latter part of the reign of Louis XV. Nor was there one court in which an ambassador resided on the part of the ministers, in which another, as a spy on him, did not also reside on the part of the king. They who pursued the scheme for keeping peace on the Continent, and particularly with Austria, acting officially and publicly, the other faction counteracting and opposing them. These private agents were continually going from their function to the Bastile and from the Bastile to employment, and favour again. An inextricable cabal was formed, some of persons of rank, others of subordinates. But by this means the corps of politicians was augmented in number, and the whole formed a body of active, adventuring, ambitious, discontented people, despising the regular ministry, despising the courts at which they were employed, despising the court which employed them.

The unfortunate Louis XVI [1] was not the first cause

It may be right to do justice to Louis XVI. He did what he could to destroy the double diplomacy of France. He had all the secret correspondence burnt, except one piece, which was called, *Conjectures raisonnées sur la situation de la France dans le Système Politique de l'Europe*; a work executed by M. Favier, under the direction of Count Broglie. A single copy of this was said to have been found in the cabinet of Louis XVI. It was published with some subsequent state papers of Vergennes, Turgot, and others, as, 'a new benefit of the revolution;' and the advertisement to the publication ends with the following words: '*Il sera facile de se convaincre, qu'*Y COMPRIS MÊME LA RÉVOLUTION, *en grande partie,* ON TROUVE DANS CES MÉMOIRES ET SES CONJECTURES LE GERME DE TOUT CE

of the evil by which he suffered. He came to it, as to a sort of inheritance, by the false politics of his immediate predecessor. This system of dark and perplexed intrigue had come to its perfection before he came to the throne: and even then the revolution strongly operated in all its causes.

There was no point on which the discontented diplomatic politicians so bitterly arraigned their cabinet, as for the decay of French influence in all others. From quarrelling with the court, they began to complain of monarchy itself, as a system of government too variable for any regular plan of national aggrandizement. They observed that in that sort of regimen too much depended on the personal character of the prince; that the vicissitudes produced by the succession of princes of a different character, and even the vicissitudes produced in the same man, by the different views and inclinations belonging to youth, manhood, and age, disturbed and distracted the policy of a country made by nature for extensive empire, or, what was still more to their taste, for that sort of general over-ruling influence which prepared empire or supplied the place of it. They had continually in their hands the observations of *Machiavel* on *Livy*. They had *Montesquieu's Grandeur et Décadence des Romains* as a manual; and they compared, with mortification, the systematic proceedings of a Roman senate with the fluctuations of a monarchy. They observed the very small additions of territory which all the power of France, actuated by all the ambition of France, had acquired in two centuries. The Romans had frequently acquired more in a single year. They severely and in every part of it criticized the reign of Louis XIV, whose irregular and desultory ambition had more provoked

QU'ARRIVA AUJOURD'HUI, *et qu'on ne peut, sans les avoir lus, être bien au fait des intérêts, et même des vues actuelles des diverses puissances de l'Europe.*' The book is entitled, *Politique de tous les Cabinets de l'Europe pendant les règnes de Louis XV et Louis XVI.* It is altogether very curious, and worth reading.

than endangered Europe. Indeed, they who will be at the pains of seriously considering the history of that period will see that those French politicians had some reason. They who will not take the trouble of reviewing it through all its wars and all its negotiations will consult the short but judicious criticism of the Marquis de Montalembert on that subject. It may be read separately from his ingenious system of fortification and military defence, on the practical merit of which I am unable to form a judgment.

The diplomatic politicians of whom I speak, and who formed by far the majority in that class, made disadvantageous comparisons even between their more legal and formalizing monarchy, and the monarchies of other states, as a system of power and influence. They observed that France not only lost ground herself, but, through the languor and unsteadiness of her pursuits, and from her aiming through commerce at naval force which she never could attain without losing more on one side than she could gain on the other, that three great powers, each of them (as military states) capable of balancing her, had grown up on the Continent. Russia and Prussia had been created almost within memory; and Austria, though not a new power, and even curtailed in territory, was, by the very collision in which she lost that territory, greatly improved in her military discipline and force. During the reign of Maria Theresa the interior economy of the country was made more to correspond with the support of great armies than formerly it had been. As to Prussia, a merely military power, they observed that one war had enriched her with as considerable a conquest as France had acquired in centuries. Russia had broken the Turkish power, by which Austria might be, as formerly she had been, balanced in favour of France. They felt it with pain that the two northern powers of Sweden and Denmark were in general under the sway of Russia; or that, at best, France kept up a very doubtful conflict, with many fluctuations of fortune, and at an enormous expense,

in Sweden. In Holland, the French party seemed, if not extinguished, at least utterly obscured, and kept under by a stadtholder, leaning for support sometimes on Great Britain, sometimes on Prussia, sometimes on both, never on France. Even the spreading of the Bourbon family had become merely a family accommodation; and had little effect on the national politics. This alliance, they said, extinguished Spain by destroying all its energy, without adding anything to the real power of France in the accession of the forces of its great rival. In Italy, the same family accommodation, the same national insignificance, were equally visible. What cure for the radical weakness of the French monarchy, to which all the means which wit could devise, or nature and fortune could bestow, towards universal empire, was not of force to give life, or vigour, or consistency,—but in a republic? Out the word came; and it never went back.

Whether they reasoned right or wrong, or that there was some mixture of right and wrong in their reasoning, I am sure that in this manner they felt and reasoned. The different effects of a great military and ambitious republic, and of a monarchy of the same description, were constantly in their mouths. The principle was ready to operate when opportunities should offer, which few of them indeed foresaw in the extent in which they were afterwards presented; but these opportunities, in some degree or other, they all ardently wished for.

When I was in Paris in 1773, the treaty of 1756 between Austria and France was deplored as a national calamity; because it united France in friendship with a power, at whose expense alone they could hope any continental aggrandizement. When the first partition of Poland was made, in which France had no share, and which had further aggrandized every one of the three powers of which they were most jealous, I found them in a perfect frenzy of rage and indignation: not that they were hurt at the shocking and uncoloured violence and injustice of that partition, but at the debility, improvidence, and want of activity, in their

government, in not preventing it as a means of aggrandizement to their rivals, or in not contriving, by exchanges of some kind or other, to obtain their share of advantage from that robbery.

In that or nearly in that state of things and of opinions, came the Austrian match; which promised to draw the knot, as afterwards in effect it did, still more closely between the old rival houses. This added exceedingly to their hatred and contempt of their monarchy. It was for this reason that the late glorious queen, who on all accounts was formed to produce general love and admiration, and whose life was as mild and beneficent as her death was beyond example great and heroic, became so very soon and so very much the object of an implacable rancour, never to be extinguished but in her blood. When I wrote my letter in answer to M. de Menonville, in the beginning of January, 1791, I had good reason for thinking that this description of revolutionists did not so early nor so steadily point their murderous designs at the martyr king as at the royal heroine. It was accident, and the momentary depression of that part of the faction, that gave to the husband the happy priority in death.

From this their restless desire of an over-ruling influence, they bent a very great part of their designs and efforts to revive the old French party, which was a democratic party in Holland, and to make a revolution there. They were happy at the troubles which the singular imprudence of Joseph II had stirred up in the Austrian Netherlands. They rejoiced when they saw him irritate his subjects, profess philosophy, send away the Dutch garrisons, and dismantle his fortifications. As to Holland, they never forgave either the king or the ministry for suffering that object, which they justly looked on as principal in their design of reducing the power of England, to escape out of their hands. This was the true secret of the commercial treaty, made, on their part, against all the old rules and principles of commerce, with a view of diverting the English nation, by a pursuit of immediate profit,

from an attention to the progress of France in its designs upon that republic. The system of the economists, which led to the general opening of commerce, facilitated that treaty, but did not produce it. They were in despair when they found that by the vigour of Mr. Pitt, supported in this point by Mr. Fox, and the opposition, the object, to which they had sacrificed their manufactures, was lost to their ambition.

This eager desire of raising France from the condition into which she had fallen, as they conceived, from her monarchical imbecility, had been the mainspring of their precedent interference in that unhappy American quarrel, the bad effects of which to this nation have not, as yet, fully disclosed themselves. These sentiments had been long lurking in their breasts, though their views were only discovered now and then, in heat and as by escapes, but on this occasion they exploded suddenly. They were professed with ostentation, and propagated with zeal. These sentiments were not produced, as some think, by their American alliance. The American alliance was produced by their republican principles and republican policy. This new relation undoubtedly did much. The discourses and cabals that it produced, the intercourse that it established, and, above all, the example, which made it seem practicable to establish a republic in a great extent of country, finished the work, and gave to that part of the revolutionary faction a degree of strength, which required other energies than the late king possessed, to resist, or even to restrain. It spread everywhere; but it was nowhere more prevalent than in the heart of the court. The palace of Versailles, by its language, seemed a forum of democracy. To have pointed out to most of those politicians, from their dispositions and movements, what has since happened, the fall of their own monarchy, of their own laws, of their own religion, would have been to furnish a motive the more for pushing forward a system on which they considered

all these things as incumbrances. Such in truth they were. And we have seen them succeed not only in the destruction of their monarchy; but in all the objects of ambition that they proposed from that destruction.

When I contemplate the scheme on which France is formed, and when I compare it with these systems, with which it is and ever must be in conflict, those things which seem as defects in her polity are the very things which make me tremble. The states of the Christian world have grown up to their present magnitude in a great length of time, and by a great variety of accidents. They have been improved to what we see them with greater or less degrees of felicity and skill. Not one of them has been formed upon a regular plan or with any unity of design. As their constitutions are not systematical, they have not been directed to any *peculiar* end, eminently distinguished, and superseding every other. The objects which they embrace are of the greatest possible variety, and have become in a manner infinite. In all these old countries, the state has been made to the people, and not the people conformed to the state. Every state has pursued not only every sort of social advantage, but it has cultivated the welfare of every individual. His wants, his wishes, even his tastes, have been consulted. This comprehensive scheme virtually produced a degree of personal liberty in forms the most adverse of it. That liberty was found, under monarchies styled absolute, in a degree unknown to the ancient commonwealths. From hence the powers of all our modern states meet, in all their movements, with some obstruction. It is therefore no wonder that, when these states are to be considered as machines to operate for some one great end, this dissipated and balanced force is not easily concentred, or made to bear with the whole force of the nation upon one point.

The British state is, without question, that which pursues the greatest variety of ends, and is the least disposed to sacrifice any one of them to another, or to

the whole. It aims at taking in the entire circle of human desires, and securing for them their fair enjoyment. Our legislature has been ever closely connected, in its most efficient part, with individual feeling, and individual interest. Personal liberty, the most lively of these feelings and the most important of these interests, which in other European countries has rather arisen from the system of manners and the habitudes of life, than from the laws of the state (in which it flourished more from neglect than attention), in England has been a direct object of government.

On this principle England would be the weakest power in the whole system. Fortunately, however, the great riches of this kingdom arising from a variety of causes, and the disposition of the people, which is as great to spend as to accumulate, has easily afforded a disposable surplus that gives a mighty momentum to the state. This difficulty, with these advantages to overcome it, has called forth the talents of the English financiers, who, by the surplus of industry poured out by prodigality, have outdone everything which has been accomplished in other nations. The present minister has outdone his predecessors; and, as a minister of revenue, is far above my power of praise. But still there are cases in which England feels more than several others (though they all feel) the perplexity of an immense body of balanced advantages, and of individual demands, and of some irregularity in the whole mass.

France differs essentially from all those governments which are formed without system, which exist by habit, and which are confused with the multitude, and with the perplexity of their pursuits. What now stands as government in France is struck out at a heat. The design is wicked, immoral, impious, oppressive; but it is spirited and daring; it is systematic; it is simple in its principle; it has unity and consistency in perfection. In that country entirely to cut off a branch of commerce, to extinguish a manufacture, to destroy the circulation of money, to violate credit,

to suspend the course of agriculture, even to burn a city, or to lay waste a province of their own, does not cost them a moment's anxiety. To them the will, the wish, the want, the liberty, the toil, the blood of individuals, is as nothing. Individuality is left out of their scheme of government. The state is all in all. Everything is referred to the production of force; afterwards everything is trusted to the use of it. It is military in its principle, in its maxims, in its spirit, and in all its movements. The state has dominion and conquest for its sole objects; dominion over minds by proselytism, over bodies by arms.

Thus constituted, with an immense body of natural means which are lessened in their amount only to be increased in their effect, France has, since the accomplishment of the revolution, a complete unity in its direction. It has destroyed every resource of the state, which depends upon opinion and the good-will of individuals. The riches of convention disappear. The advantages of nature in some measure remain: even these, I admit, are astonishingly lessened; the command over what remains is complete and absolute. We go about asking when assignats will expire, and we laugh at the last price of them. But what signifies the fate of those tickets of despotism? The despotism will find despotic means of supply. They have found the short cut to the productions of nature, while others, in pursuit of them, are obliged to wind through the labyrinth of a very intricate state of society. They seize upon the fruit of the labour; they seize upon the labourer himself. Were France but half of what it is in population, in compactness, in applicability of its force, situated as it is, and being what it is, it would be too strong for most of the states of Europe, constituted as they are, and proceeding as they proceed. Would it be wise to estimate what the world of Europe, as well as the world of Asia, had to dread from Genghiz Khân, upon a contemplation of the resources of the cold and barren spot in the remotest Tartary, from whence first issued that scourge of the

human race ? Ought we to judge from the excise and stamp duties of the rocks, or from the paper circulation of the sands of Arabia, the power by which Mahomet and his tribes laid hold at once on the two most powerful empires of the world ; beat one of them totally to the ground, broke to pieces the other, and, in not much longer space of time than I have lived, overturned governments, laws, manners, religion, and extended an empire from the Indus to the Pyrenees ?

Material resources never have supplied, nor ever can supply, the want of unity in design, and constancy in pursuit. But unity in design, and perseverance and boldness in pursuit, have never wanted resources, and never will. We have not considered as we ought the dreadful energy of a state, in which the property has nothing to do with the government. Reflect, my dear sir, reflect again and again, on a government, in which the property is in complete subjection, and where nothing rules but the mind of desperate men. The condition of a commonwealth not governed by its property was a combination of things, which the learned and ingenious speculator Harrington, who has tossed about society into all forms, never could imagine to be possible. We have seen it ; the world has felt it ; and if the world will shut their eyes to this state of things, they will feel it more. The rulers there have found their resources in crimes. The discovery is dreadful : the mine exhaustless. They have everything to gain, and they have nothing to lose. They have a boundless inheritance in hope ; and there is no medium for them, betwixt the highest elevation, and death with infamy. Never can they, who, from the miserable servitude of the desk have been raised to empire, again submit to the bondage of a starving bureau, or the profit of copying music, or writing plaidoyers by the sheet. It has made me often smile in bitterness, when I have heard talk of an indemnity to such men, provided they returned to their allegiance.

From all this, what is my inference ? It is that

this new system of robbery in France cannot be rendered safe by any art; that it *must* be destroyed, or that it will destroy all Europe; that to destroy that enemy, by some means or other, the force opposed to it should be made to bear some analogy and resemblance to the force and spirit which that system exerts; that war ought to be made against it, in its vulnerable parts. These are my inferences. In one word, with this republic nothing independent can co-exist. The errors of Louis XVI were more pardonable to prudence than any of those of the same kind into which the allied courts may fall. They have the benefit of his dreadful example.

The unhappy Louis XVI was a man of the best intentions that probably ever reigned. He was by no means deficient in talents. He had a most laudable desire to supply by general reading, and even by the acquisition of elemental knowledge, an education in all points originally defective; but nobody told him (and it was no wonder he should not himself divine it) that the world of which he read, and the world in which he lived, were no longer the same. Desirous of doing everything for the best, fearful of cabal, distrusting his own judgment, he sought his ministers of all kinds upon public testimony. But as courts are the field for caballers, the public is the theatre for mountebanks and impostors. The cure for both those evils is in the discernment of the prince. But an accurate and penetrating discernment is what in a young prince could not be looked for.

His conduct in its principle was not unwise; but, like most other of his well-meant designs, it failed in his hands. It failed partly from mere ill fortune, to which speculators are rarely pleased to assign that very large share to which she is justly entitled in human affairs. The failure, perhaps, in part was owing to his suffering his system to be vitiated and disturbed by those intrigues, which it is, humanly speaking, impossible wholly to prevent in courts, or indeed under any form of government. However,

with these aberrations, he gave himself over to a succession of the statesmen of public opinion. In other things he thought that he might be a king on the terms of his predecessors. He was conscious of the purity of his heart and the general good tendency of his government. He flattered himself, as most men in his situation will, that he might consult his ease without danger to his safety. It is not at all wonderful that both he and his ministers, giving way abundantly in other respects to innovation, should take up in policy with the tradition of their monarchy. Under his ancestors the monarchy had subsisted, and even been strengthened, by the generation or support of republics. First, the Swiss republics grew under the guardianship of the French monarchy. The Dutch republics were hatched and cherished under the same incubation. Afterwards, a republican constitution was, under the influence of France, established in the empire against the pretensions of its chief. Even whilst the monarchy of France, by a series of wars and negotiations, and lastly by the treaties of Westphalia, had obtained the establishment of the Protestants in Germany as a law of the empire, the same monarchy under Louis XIII had force enough to destroy the republican system of the Protestants at home.

Louis XVI was a diligent reader of history. But the very lamp of prudence blinded him. The guide of human life led him astray. A silent revolution in the moral world preceded the political, and prepared it. It became of more importance than ever what examples were given, and what measures were adopted. Their causes no longer lurked in the recesses of cabinets, or in the private conspiracies of the factious. They were no longer to be controlled by the force and influence of the grandees, who formerly had been able to stir up troubles by their discontents, and to quiet them by their corruption. The chain of subordination, even in cabal and sedition, was broken in its most important links. It was no longer the great and the populace. Other interests were formed, other dependencies, other

connexions, other communications. The middle classes had swelled far beyond their former proportions. Like whatever is the most effectively rich and great in society, these classes became the seat of all the active politics; and the preponderating weight to decide on them. There were all the energies by which fortune is acquired; there the consequence of their success. There were all the talents which assert their pretensions, and are impatient of the place which settled society prescribes to them. These descriptions had got between the great and the populace; and the influence on the lower classes was with them. The spirit of ambition had taken possession of this class as violently as ever it had done of any other. They felt the importance of this situation. The correspondence of the monied and the mercantile world, the literary intercourse of academies, but, above all, the press, of which they had in a manner entire possession, made a kind of electric communication everywhere. The press, in reality, has made every government, in its spirit, almost democratic. Without the great, the first movements in this revolution could not, perhaps, have been given. But the spirit of ambition, now for the first time connected with the spirit of speculation, was not to be restrained at will. There was no longer any means of arresting a principle in its course. When Louis XVI, under the influence of the enemies to monarchy, meant to found but one republic, he set up two. When he meant to take away half the crown of his neighbour, he lost the whole of his own. Louis XVI could not with impunity countenance a new republic: yet between his throne and that dangerous lodgment for an enemy, which he had erected, he had the whole Atlantic for a ditch. He had for an out-work the English nation itself, friendly to liberty, adverse to that mode of it. He was surrounded by a rampart of monarchies, most of them allied to him, and generally under his influence. Yet even thus secured, a republic erected under his auspices, and dependent on his power, became fatal to his throne. The very money which

he had lent to support this republic, by a good faith, which to him operated as perfidy, was punctually paid to his enemies, and became a resource in the hands of his assassins.

With this example before their eyes, do any ministers in England, do any ministers in Austria, really flatter themselves that they can erect, not on the remote shores of the Atlantic, but in their view, in their vicinity, in absolute contact with one of them, not a commercial but a martial republic—a republic not of simple husbandmen or fishermen, but of intriguers, and of warriors—a republic of a character the most restless, the most enterprising, the most impious, the most fierce and bloody, the most hypocritical, and perfidious, the most bold and daring, that ever has been seen, or indeed that can be conceived to exist, without bringing on their own certain ruin ?

Such is the republic to which we are going to give a place in civilized fellowship: the republic, which, with joint consent, we are going to establish in the centre of Europe, in a post that overlooks and commands every other state, and which eminently confronts and menaces this kingdom.

You cannot fail to observe that I speak as if the allied powers were actually consenting, and not compelled by events to the establishment of this faction in France. The words have not escaped me. You will hereafter naturally expect that I should make them good. But whether in adopting this measure we are madly active, or weakly passive, or pusillanimously panic struck, the effects will be the same. You may call this faction, which has eradicated the monarchy,—expelled the proprietary, persecuted religion, and trampled upon law[1],—you may call this France if you please: but of the ancient France nothing remains but its central geography; its iron frontier; its spirit of ambition; its audacity of enterprise; its perplexing intrigue. These, and these

[1] See our Declaration.

alone, remain: and they remain heightened in their principle and augmented in their means. All the former correctives, whether of virtue or of weakness, which existed in the old monarchy, are gone. No single new corrective is to be found in the whole body of the new institutions. How should such a thing be found there, when everything has been chosen with care and selection to forward all those ambitious designs and dispositions, not to control them? The whole is a body of ways and means for the supply of dominion, without one heterogeneous particle in it.

Here I suffer you to breathe, and leave to your meditation what has occurred to me on the *genius and character* of the French revolution. From having this before us, we may be better able to determine on the first question I proposed, that is, how far nations, called foreign, are likely to be affected with the system established within that territory. I intended to proceed next on the question of her facilities, from *the internal state of other nations, and particularly of this*, for obtaining her ends: but I ought to be aware, that my notions are controverted.—I mean, therefore, in my next letter, to take notice of what, in that way, has been recommended to me as the most deserving of notice. In the examination of those pieces, I shall have occasion to discuss some other of the topics to which I have called your attention. You know that the letters which I now send to the press, as well as a part of what is to follow, have been in their substance long since written. A circumstance which your partiality alone could make of importance to you, but which to the public is of no importance at all, retarded their appearance. The late events which press upon us obliged me to make some additions; but no substantial change in the matter.

This discussion, my friend, will be long. But the matter is serious; and if ever the fate of the world could be truly said to depend on a particular measure, it is upon this peace. For the present, farewell.

LETTER III

ON THE RUPTURE OF THE NEGOTIATION; THE TERMS OF PEACE PROPOSED; AND THE RESOURCES OF THE COUNTRY FOR THE CONTINUANCE OF THE WAR. 1797.

DEAR SIR,

I THANK you for the bundle of state-papers which I received yesterday. I have travelled through the negotiation; and a sad, founderous road it is. There is a sort of standing jest against my countrymen, that one of them on his journey having found a piece of pleasant road, he proposed to his companion to go over it again. This proposal, with regard to the worthy traveller's final destination, was certainly a blunder. It was no blunder as to his immediate satisfaction; for the way was pleasant. In the irksome journey of the regicide negotiations it is otherwise: our 'paths are not paths of pleasantness, nor our ways the ways to peace.' All our mistakes (if such they are), like those of our Hibernian traveller, are mistakes of repetition; and they will be full as far from bringing us to our place of rest, as his well-considered project was from forwarding him to his inn. Yet I see we persevere. Fatigued with our former course, too listless to explore a new one, kept in action by inertness, moving only because we have been in motion, with a sort of plodding perseverance, we resolved to measure back again the very same joyless, hopeless, and inglorious track. Backward and forward; oscillation, not progression; much going in a scanty space; the travels of a postillion, miles enough

to circle the globe in one short stage; we have been, and we are yet to be jolted and rattled over the loose, misplaced stones, and the treacherous hollows of this rough, ill-kept, broken-up, treacherous French causeway!

The declaration, which brings up the rear of the papers laid before parliament, contains a review and a reasoned summary of all our attempts, and all our failures; a concise but correct narrative of the painful steps taken to bring on the essay of a treaty at Paris; a clear exposure of all the rebuffs we received in the progress of that experiment; an honest confession of our departure from all the rules and all the principles of political negotiation, and of common prudence, in the conduct of it; and to crown the whole, a fair account of the atrocious manner in which the regicide enemies had broken up what had been so inauspiciously begun and so feebly carried on, by finally, and with all scorn, driving our suppliant ambassador out of the limits of their usurpation.

Even after all that I have lately seen, I was a little surprised at this exposure. A minute display of hopes formed without foundation, and of labours pursued without fruit, is a thing not very flattering to self-estimation. But truth has its rights, and it will assert them. The declaration, after doing all this with a mortifying candour, concludes the whole recapitulation with an engagement still more extraordinary than all the unusual matter it contains. It says, 'That his majesty, who had entered into this negotiation with *good faith*, who has suffered *no* impediment to prevent his prosecuting it with *earnestness and sincerity*, has now *only to lament* its abrupt termination, and to renew *in the face of all Europe the solemn declaration* that whenever his enemies shall be *disposed* to enter upon the work of a general pacification in a spirit of conciliation and equity, nothing shall be wanting on his part to contribute to the accomplishment of that great object.'

If the disgusting detail of the accumulated insults

we have received, in what we have properly called our 'solicitation' to a gang of felons and murderers, had been produced as a proof of the utter inefficacy of that mode of proceeding with that description of persons, I should have nothing at all to object to it. It might furnish matter conclusive in argument, and instructive in policy: but with all due submission to high authority, and with all decent deference to superior lights, it does not seem quite clear to a discernment no better than mine that the premises in that picce conduct irresistibly to the conclusion. A laboured display of the ill consequences which have attended an uniform course of submission to every mode of contumelious insult, with which the despotism of a proud, capricious, insulting, and implacable foe has chosen to buffet our patience, does not appear, to my poor thoughts, to be properly brought forth as a preliminary to justify a resolution of persevering in the very same kind of conduct, towards the very same sort of person, and on the very same principles. We state our experience, and then we come to the manly resolution of acting in contradiction to it. All that has passed at Paris, to the moment of our being shamefully hissed off that stage, has been nothing but a more solemn representation, on the theatre of the nation, of what had been before in rehearsal at Basle. As it is not only confessed by us, but made a matter of charge on the enemy, that he had given us no encouragement to believe there was a change in his disposition or in his policy at any time subsequent to the period of his rejecting our first overtures, there seems to have been no assignable motive for sending Lord Malmesbury to Paris, except to expose his humbled country to the worst indignities, and the first of the kind, as the declaration very truly observes, that have been known in the world of negotiation.

An honest neighbour of mine is not altogether unhappy in the application of an old common story to a present occasion. It may be said of my friend, what Horace says of a neighbour of his, '*garrit aniles*

ex re fabellas.' Conversing on this strange subject, he told me a current story of a simple English country squire, who was persuaded by certain *dilettanti* of his acquaintance to see the world, and to become knowing in men and manners.

Among other celebrated places, it was recommended to him to visit Constantinople. He took their advice. After various adventures, not to our purpose to dwell upon, he happily arrived at that famous city. As soon as he had a little reposed himself from his fatigue, he took a walk into the streets; but he had not gone far, before a 'malignant and a turban'd Turk' had his choler roused by the careless and assured air with which this infidel strutted about in the metropolis of true believers. In this temper he lost no time in doing to our traveller the honours of the place. The Turk crossed over the way, and with perfect good-will gave him two or three lusty kicks on the seat of honour. To resent or to return the compliment in Turkey was quite out of the question. Our traveller, since he could no otherwise acknowledge this kind of favour, received it with the best grace in the world—he made one of his most ceremonious bows, and begged the kicking Mussulman, 'to accept his perfect assurances of high consideration.' Our countryman was too wise to imitate Othello in the use of the dagger. He thought it better, as better it was, to assuage his bruised dignity with half a yard square of balmy diplomatic diachylon. In the disasters of their friends people are seldom wanting in a laudable patience. When they are such as do not threaten to end fatally, they become even matter of pleasantry. The English fellow-travellers of our sufferer, finding him a little out of spirits, entreated him not to take so slight a business so very seriously. They told him it was the custom of the country; that every country had its customs; that the Turkish manners were a little rough; but that in the main the Turks were a good-natured people; that what would have been a deadly affront anywhere else, was only a little freedom there; in short, they told him

to think no more of the matter, and to try his fortune in another *promenade*. But the squire, though a little clownish, had some home-bred sense. 'What! have I come, at all this expense and trouble, all the way to Constantinople only to be kicked? Without going beyond my own stable, my groom, for half a crown, would have kicked me to my heart's content. I don't mean to stay in Constantinople eight-and-forty hours, nor ever to return to this rough, good-natured people, that have their own customs.'

In my opinion the squire was in the right. He was satisfied with his first ramble and his first injuries. But reason of state and common sense are two things. If it were not for this difference it might not appear of absolute necessity, after having received a certain quantity of buffetings by advance, that we should send a peer of the realm to the scum of the earth, to collect the debt to the last farthing; and to receive, with infinite aggravation, the same scorns which had been paid to our supplication through a commoner: but it was proper, I suppose, that the whole of our country, in all its orders, should have a share of the indignity; and, as in reason, that the higher orders should touch the larger proportion.

This business was not ended, because our dignity was wounded, or because our patience was worn out with contumely and scorn. We had not disgorged one particle of the nauseous doses with which we were so liberally crammed by the mountebanks of Paris, in order to drug and diet us into perfect tameness. No; we waited till the morbid strength of our *boulimia* for their physic had exhausted the well-stored dispensary of their empiricism. It is impossible to guess at the term to which our forbearance would have extended. The regicides were more fatigued with giving blows than the callous cheek of British diplomacy was hurt in receiving them. They have had no way left for getting rid of this mendicant perseverance, but by sending for the beadle, and forcibly driving our embassy 'of shreds and patches,' with all its mump-

ing cant, from the inhospitable door of Cannibal Castle—

> 'Where the gaunt mastiff, growling at the gate,
> Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat.'

I think we might have found, before the rude hand of insolent office was on our shoulder, and the staff of usurped authority brandished over our heads, that contempt of the suppliant is not the best forwarder of a suit; that national disgrace is not the high road to security, much less to power and greatness. Patience, indeed, strongly indicates the love of peace; but mere love does not always lead to enjoyment. It is the power of winning that palm which ensures our wearing it. Virtues have their place; and out of their place they hardly deserve the name. They pass into the neighbouring vice. The patience of fortitude and the endurance of pusillanimity are things very different, as in their principle, so in their effects.

In truth this declaration, containing a narrative of the first transaction of the kind (and I hope it will be the last) in the intercourse of nations, as a composition, is ably drawn. It does credit to our official style. The report of the speech of the minister in a great assembly, which I have read, is a comment upon the declaration. Without inquiry how far that report is exact (inferior I believe it may be to what it would represent), yet still it reads as a most eloquent and finished performance. Hardly one galling circumstance of the indignities offered by the Directory of regicide to the supplications made to that junto in his majesty's name has been spared. Every one of the aggravations attendant on these acts of outrage is, with wonderful perspicuity and order, brought forward in its place, and in the manner most fitted to produce its effect. They are turned to every point of view in which they can be seen to the best advantage. All the parts are so arranged as to point out their relation and to furnish a true idea of the spirit of the whole transaction.

This speech may stand for a model. Never, for the

triumphal decoration of any theatre, not for the decoration of those of Athens and Rome, nor even of this theatre of Paris, from the embroideries of Babylon or from the loom of the Gobelins, has there been sent any historic tissue, so truly drawn, so closely and so finely wrought, or in which the forms are brought out in the rich purple of such glowing and blushing colours. It puts me in mind of the piece of tapestry, with which Virgil proposed to adorn the theatre he was to erect to Augustus, upon the banks of the Mincio, who now hides his head in his reeds, and leads his slow and melancholy windings through banks wasted by the barbarians of Gaul. He supposes that the artifice is such, that the figures of the conquered nations in his tapestry are made to play their part, and are confounded in the machine.

'. . . . . utque
Purpurea intexti tollant aulaea Britanni;'

Or as Dryden translates it somewhat paraphrastically, but not less in the spirit of the prophet than of the poet,

'Where the proud theatres disclose the scene,
Which, interwoven, Britons seem to raise,
And show the triumph which their shame displays.'

It is something wonderful that the sagacity shown in the declaration and the speech (and, so far as it goes, greater was never shown) should have failed to discover to the writer, and to the speaker, the inseparable relation between the parties to this transaction; and that nothing can be said to display the imperious arrogance of a base enemy, which does not describe with equal force and equal truth the contemptible figure of an abject embassy to that imperious power.

It is no less striking that the same obvious reflection should not occur to those gentlemen who conducted the opposition to government. But their thoughts were turned another way. They seem to have been so entirely occupied with the defence of the French Directory, so very eager in finding recriminatory

precedents to justify every act of its intolerable insolence, so animated in their accusations of ministry for not having, at the very outset, made concessions proportioned to the dignity of the great victorious power he had offended, that everything concerning the sacrifice in this business of national honour, and of the most fundamental principles in the policy of negotiation, seemed wholly to have escaped them. To this fatal hour, the contention in parliament appeared in another form, and was animated by another spirit. For three hundred years and more, we have had wars with what stood as government in France. In all that period the language of ministers, whether of boast or of apology, was that they had left nothing undone for the assertion of the national honour; the opposition, whether patriotically or factiously, contending that the ministers had been oblivious of the national glory, and had made improper sacrifices of that public interest, which they were bound not only to preserve, but by all fair methods to augment. This total change of tone on both sides of your house forms itself no inconsiderable revolution; and I am afraid it prognosticates others of still greater importance. The ministers exhausted the stores of their eloquence in demonstrating that they had quitted the safe, beaten high-way of treaty between independent powers; that to pacify the enemy they had made every sacrifice to the national dignity, and that they had offered to immolate at the same shrine the most valuable of the national acquisitions. The opposition insisted that the victims were not fat nor fair enough to be offered on the altars of blasphemed regicide; and it was inferred from thence, that the sacrificial ministers (who were a sort of intruders in the worship of the new divinity), in their schismatical devotion had discovered more of hypocrisy than zeal. They charged them with a concealed resolution to persevere in what these gentlemen have (in perfect consistency, indeed, with themselves, but most irreconcilably with fact and reason) called an unjust and impolitic war.

That day was, I fear, the fatal term of *local* patriotism, On that day, I fear, there was an end of that narrow scheme of relations called our country, with all its pride, its prejudices, and its partial affections. All the little quiet rivulets that watered a humble, a contracted, but not an unfruitful field, are to be lost in the waste expanse, and boundless, barren ocean of the homicide philanthropy of France. It is no longer an object of terror, the aggrandizement of a new power, which teaches as a professor that philanthropy in their chair; whilst it propagates by arms, and establishes by conquest, the comprehensive system of universal fraternity. In what light is all this viewed in a great assembly? The party which takes the lead there has no longer any apprehensions, except those that arise from not being admitted to the closest and most confidential connexions with the metropolis of that fraternity. That reigning party no longer touches on its favourite subject, the display of those horrors, that must attend the existence of a power with such dispositions and principles, seated in the heart of Europe. It is satisfied to find some loose, ambiguous expressions in its former declarations, which may set it free from its professions and engagements. It always speaks of peace with the regicides as a great and an undoubted blessing; and such a blessing as, if obtained, promises, as much as any human disposition of things can promise, security and permanence. It holds out nothing at all definite towards this security. It only seeks, by a restoration to some of their former owners of some fragments of the general wreck of Europe, to find a plausible plea for a present retreat from an embarrassing position. As to the future, that party is content to leave it, covered in a night of the most palpable obscurity. It never once has entered into a particle of detail of what our own situation, or that of other powers, must be, under the blessings of the peace we seek. This defect, to my power, I mean to supply; that if any persons should still continue to think an attempt at foresight is any part of the duty of a statesman, I may

contribute my trifle to the materials of his speculation.

As to the other party, the minority of to-day, possibly the majority of to-morrow, small in number but full of talents and every species of energy, which, upon the avowed ground of being more acceptable to France, is a candidate for the helm of this kingdom, it has never changed from the beginning. It has preserved a perennial consistency. This would be a never-failing source of true glory, if springing from just and right; but it is truly dreadful if it be an arm of Styx, which springs out of the profoundest depths of a poisoned soil. The French maxims were by these gentlemen at no time condemned. I speak of their language in the most moderate terms. There are many who think that they have gone much further; that they have always magnified and extolled the French maxims; that not in the least disgusted or discouraged by the monstrous evils, which have attended these maxims from the moment of their adoption both at home and abroad, they still continue to predict, that in due time they must produce the greatest good to the poor human race. They obstinately persist in stating those evils as matter of accident; as things wholly collateral to the system.

It is observed that this party has never spoken of an ally of Great Britain with the smallest degree of respect or regard; on the contrary, it has generally mentioned them under opprobrious appellations, and in such terms of contempt or execration, as never had been heard before, because no such would have formerly been permitted in our public assemblies. The moment, however, that any of those allies quitted this obnoxious connexion, the party has instantly passed an act of indemnity and oblivion in their favour. After this, no sort of censure on their conduct; no imputation on their character! From that moment their pardon was sealed in a reverential and mysterious silence. With the gentlemen of this minority, there is no ally, from one end of Europe

to the other, with whom we ought not to be ashamed to act. The whole college of the states of Europe is no better than a gang of tyrants. With them all our connexions were broken off at once. We ought to have cultivated France, and France alone, from the moment of her revolution. On that happy change, all our dread of that nation as a power was to cease. She became in an instant dear to our affections, and one with our interests. All other nations we ought to have commanded not to trouble her sacred throes, whilst in labour to bring into a happy birth her abundant litter of constitutions. We ought to have acted under her auspices, in extending her salutary influence upon every side. From that moment England and France were become natural allies, and all the other states natural enemies. The whole face of the world was changed. What was it to us if she acquired Holland and the Austrian Netherlands? By her conquests she only enlarged the sphere of her beneficence; she only extended the blessings of liberty to so many more foolishly reluctant nations. What was it to England, if by adding these, among the richest and most peopled countries of the world, to her territories, she thereby left no possible link of communication between us and any other power with whom we could act against her? On this new system of optimism, it is so much the better;—so much the further are we removed from the contact with infectious despotism. No longer a thought of a barrier in the Netherlands to Holland against France. All that is obsolete policy. It is fit that France should have both Holland and the Austrian Netherlands too, as a barrier to her against the attacks of despotism. She cannot multiply her securities too much; and as to our security, it is to be found in hers. Had we cherished her from the beginning, and felt for her when attacked, she, poor good soul, would never have invaded any foreign nation; never murdered her sovereign and his family; never proscribed, never exiled, never imprisoned, never been guilty of extra-

judicial massacre, or of legal murder. All would have been a golden age, full of peace, order, and liberty! and philosophy, raying out from Europe, would have warmed and enlightened the universe: but unluckily, irritable philosophy, the most irritable of all things, was put into a passion, and provoked into ambition abroad, and tyranny at home. They find all this very natural and very justifiable. They choose to forget that other nations, struggling for freedom, have been attacked by their neighbours; or that their neighbours have otherwise interfered in their affairs. Often have neighbours interfered in favour of princes against their rebellious subjects; and often in favour of subjects against their prince. Such cases fill half the pages of history, yet never were they used as an apology, much less as a justification, for atrocious cruelty in princes, or for general massacre and confiscation on the part of revolted subjects; never as a politic cause for suffering any such powers to aggrandize themselves without limit and without measure. A thousand times have we seen it asserted in public prints and pamphlets, that if the nobility and priesthood of France had stayed at home, their property never would have been confiscated. One would think that none of the clergy had been robbed previous to their deportation, or that their deportation had, on their part, been a voluntary act. One would think that the nobility and gentry, and merchants and bankers, who stayed at home, had enjoyed their property in security and repose. The assertors of these positions well know, that the lot of thousands who remained at home was far more terrible; that the most cruel imprisonment was only a harbinger of a cruel and ignominious death; and that in this mother country of freedom there were no less than *three hundred thousand* at one time in prison. I go no further. I instance only these representations of the party, as staring indications of partiality to that sect, to whose dominion they would have left this country nothing to oppose but her own naked force, and consequently subjected us, on every

reverse of fortune, to the imminent danger of falling under those very evils in that very system, which are attributed, not to its own nature, but to the perverseness of others. There is nothing in the world so difficult as to put men in a state of judicial neutrality. A leaning there must ever be, and it is of the first importance to any nation to observe to what side that leaning inclines—whether to our own community, or to one with which it is in a state of hostility.

Men are rarely without some sympathy in the sufferings of others; but in the immense and diversified mass of human misery, which may be pitied, but cannot be relieved, in the gross, the mind must make a choice. Our sympathy is always more forcibly attracted towards the misfortunes of certain persons, and in certain descriptions: and this sympathetic attraction discovers, beyond a possibility of mistake, our mental affinities and elective affections. It is a much surer proof, than the strongest declaration, of a real connexion and of an overruling bias in the mind. I am told that the active sympathies of this party have been chiefly, if not wholly, attracted to the sufferings of the patriarchal rebels, who were amongst the promulgators of the maxims of the French revolution, and who have suffered, from their apt and forward scholars, some part of the evils, which they had themselves so liberally distributed to all the other parts of the community. Some of these men, flying from the knives which they had sharpened against their country and its laws, rebelling against the very powers they had set over themselves by their rebellion against their sovereign, given up by those very armies to whose faithful attachment they trusted for their safety and support, after they had completely debauched all military fidelity in its source; some of these men, I say, had fallen into the hands of the head of that family, the most illustrious person of which they had three times cruelly imprisoned, and delivered in that state of captivity to those hands from which they were able to relieve neither her, nor their own nearest and

most venerable kindred. One of these men, connected with this country by no circumstance of birth; not related to any distinguished families here; recommended by no service; endeared to this nation by no act or even expression of kindness; comprehended in no league or common cause; embraced by no laws of public hospitality; this man was the only one to be found in Europe, in whose favour the British nation, passing judgement, without hearing, on its almost only ally, was to force (and that not by soothing interposition, but with every reproach for inhumanity, cruelty, and breach of the laws of war) from prison. We were to release him from that prison out of which, in abuse of the lenity of government amidst its rigour, and in violation of at least an understood parole, he had attempted an escape: an escape excusable if you will, but naturally productive of strict and vigilant confinement. The earnestness of gentlemen to free this person was the more extraordinary, because there was full as little in him to raise admiration, from any eminent qualities he possessed, as there was to excite an interest, from any that were amiable. A person, not only of no real civil or literary talents, but of no specious appearance of either; and in his military profession, not marked as a leader in any one act of able or successful enterprise—unless his leading on (or his following) the allied army of Amazonian and male cannibal Parisians to Versailles, on the famous 5th of October, 1789, is to make his glory. Any other exploit of his, as a general, I never heard of. But the triumph of general fraternity was but the more signalized by the total want of particular claims in that case; and by postponing all such claims, in a case where they really existed, where they stood embossed, and in a manner forced themselves on the view of common, short-sighted benevolence. Whilst, for its improvement, the humanity of those gentlemen was thus on its travels, and had got as far off as Olmutz, they never thought of a place and a person much nearer to them, or of moving an instruction to

Lord Malmesbury in favour of their own suffering countryman, Sir Sydney Smith.

This officer, having attempted, with great gallantry, to cut out a vessel from one of the enemy's harbours, was taken after an obstinate resistance; such as obtained him the marked respect of those who were witnesses of his valour and knew the circumstances in which it was displayed. Upon his arrival at Paris, he was instantly thrown into prison; where the nature of his situation will best be understood, by knowing, that amongst its *mitigations*, was the permission to walk occasionally in the court, and to enjoy the privilege of shaving himself. On the old system of feelings and principles, his sufferings might have been entitled to consideration, and, even in a comparison with those of citizen La Fayette, to a priority in the order of compassion. If the ministers had neglected to take any steps in his favour, a declaration of the sense of the House of Commons would have stimulated them to their duty. If they had caused a representation to be made, such a proceeding would have added force to it. If reprisal should be thought advisable, the address of the House would have given an additional sanction to a measure which would have been, indeed, justifiable without any other sanction than its own reason. But no. Nothing at all like it. In fact, the merit of Sir Sydney Smith, and his claim on British compassion, was of a kind altogether different from that which interested so deeply the authors of the motion in favour of citizen La Fayette. In my humble opinion, Captain Sir Sydney Smith has another sort of merit with the British nation, and something of a higher claim on British humanity, than citizen La Fayette. Faithful, zealous, and ardent in the service of his king and country; full of spirit; full of resources; going out of the beaten road, but going right, because his uncommon enterprise was not conducted by a vulgar judgment;—in his profession, Sir Sydney Smith might be considered as a distinguished person, if any person

could well be distinguished in a service in which scarcely a commander can be named without putting you in mind of some action of intrepidity, skill, and vigilance, that has given them a fair title to contend with any men, and in any age. But I will say nothing further of the merits of Sir Sydney Smith: the mortal animosity of the regicide enemy supersedes all other panegyric. Their hatred is a judgment in his favour without appeal. At present he is lodged in the tower of the Temple, the last prison of Louis XVI, and the last but one of Marie Antoinette of Austria; the prison of Louis XVII; the prison of Elizabeth of Bourbon. There he lies, unpitied by the grand philanthropy, to meditate upon the fate of those who are faithful to their king and country. Whilst this prisoner, secluded from intercourse, was indulging in these cheering reflections, he might possibly have had the further consolation of learning (by means of the insolent exultation of his guards) that there was an English ambassador at Paris; he might have had the proud comfort of hearing that this ambassador had the honour of passing his mornings in respectful attendance at the office of a regicide pettifogger; and that in the evening he relaxed in the amusements of the opera, and in the spectacle of an audience totally new; an audience in which he had the pleasure of seeing about him not a single face that he could formerly have known in Paris; but, in the place of that company, one indeed more than equal to it in display of gaiety, splendour, and luxury; a set of abandoned wretches, squandering in insolent riot the spoils of their bleeding country. A subject of profound reflection both to the prisoner and to the ambassador.

Whether all the matter upon which I have grounded my opinion of this last party be fully authenticated or not, must be left to those who have had the opportunity of a nearer view of its conduct, and who have been more attentive in their perusal of the writings, which have appeared in its favour. But for my part, I have never heard the gross facts on which I ground

my idea of their marked partiality to the reigning tyranny in France, in any part, denied. I am not surprised at all this. Opinions, as they sometimes follow, so they frequently guide and direct the affections; and men may become more attached to the country of their principles, than to the country of their birth. What I have stated here is only to mark the spirit which seems to me, though in somewhat different ways, to actuate our great party leaders; and to trace this first pattern of a negotiation to its true source.

Such is the present state of our public counsels. Well might I be ashamed of what seems to be a censure of two great factions, with the two most eloquent men which this country ever saw at the head of them, if I had found that either of them could support their conduct by any example in the history of their country, I should very much prefer their judgment to my own, if I were not obliged, by an infinitely overbalancing weight of authority, to prefer the collected wisdom of ages to the abilities of any two men living. I return to the declaration, with which the history of the abortion of a treaty with the regicides is closed.

After such an elaborate display had been made of the injustice and insolence of an enemy, who seems to have been irritated by every one of the means, which had been commonly used with effect to soothe the rage of intemperate power, the natural result would be, that the scabbard, in which we in vain attempted to plunge our sword, should have been thrown away with scorn. It would have been natural that, rising in the fullness of their might, insulted majesty, despised dignity, violated justice, rejected supplication, patience goaded into fury, would have poured out all the length of the reins upon all the wrath which they had so long restrained. It might have been expected that, emulous of the glory of the youthful hero [1] in alliance with him, touched by the example of what one man, well formed and well placed, may do in the most

[1] The Archduke Charles of Austria.

desperate state of affairs, convinced there is a courage of the cabinet full as powerful, and far less vulgar than that of the field, our minister would have changed the whole line of that useless, prosperous prudence, which had hitherto produced all the effects of the blindest temerity. If he found his situation full of danger (and I do not deny that it is perilous in the extreme), he must feel that it is also full of glory; and that he is placed on a stage, than which no muse of fire, that had ascended the highest heaven of invention, could imagine anything more awful and august. It was hoped that, in this swelling scene, in which he moved with some of the first potentates of Europe for his fellow-actors, and with so many of the rest for the anxious spectators of a part, which, as he plays it, determines for ever their destiny and his own, like Ulysses in the unravelling point of the epic story, he would have thrown off his patience and his rags together; and, stripped of unworthy disguises, he would have stood forth in the form, and in the attitude, of a hero. On that day, it was thought he would have assumed the port of Mars; that he would bid to be brought forth from their hideous kennel (where his scrupulous tenderness had too long immured them) those impatient dogs of war, whose fierce regards affright even the minister of vengeance that feeds them; that he would let them loose, in famine, fever, plagues, and death, upon a guilty race, to whose frame, and to all whose habit, order, peace, religion, and virtue, are alien and abhorrent. It was expected that he would at last have thought of active and effectual war; that he would no longer amuse the British lion in the chase of mice and rats; that he would no longer employ the whole naval power of Great Britain, once the terror of the world, to prey upon the miserable remains of a peddling commerce, which the enemy did not regard, and from which none could profit. It was expected that he would have re-asserted the justice of his cause; that he would have re-animated whatever remained to him of his allies, and endeavoured to

recover those whom their fears had led astray; that he would have rekindled the martial ardour of his citizens; that he would have held out to them the example of their ancestry, the assertor of Europe, and the scourge of French ambition; that he would have reminded them of a posterity which, if this nefarious robbery, under the fraudulent name and false colour of a government, should in full power be seated in the heart of Europe, must for ever be consigned to vice, impiety, barbarism, and the most ignominious slavery of body and mind. In so holy a cause it was presumed that he would (as in the beginning of the war he did) have opened all the temples; and with prayer, with fasting, and with supplication (better directed than to the grim Moloch of regicide in France), have called upon us to raise that united cry, which has so often stormed Heaven, and with a pious violence forced down blessings upon a repentant people. It was hoped that when he had invoked upon his endeavours the favourable regard of the Protector of the human race, it would be seen that his menaces to the enemy, and his prayers to the Almighty, were not followed, but accompanied, with correspondent action. It was hoped that his shrilling trumpet should be heard, not to announce a show, but to sound a charge.

Such a conclusion to such a declaration and such a speech, would have been a thing of course; so much a thing of course, that I will be bold to say, if in any ancient history, the Roman for instance (supposing that in Rome the matter of such a detail could have been furnished), a consul had gone through such a long train of proceedings, and that there was a chasm in the manuscripts by which we had lost the conclusion of the speech and the subsequent part of the narrative, all critics would agree, that a *Freinshemius* would have been thought to have managed the supplementary business of a continuator most unskilfully, and to have supplied the hiatus most improbably, if he had not filled up the gaping space, in a manner somewhat similar (though better executed) to what I have

imagined. But too often different is rational conjecture from melancholy fact. This exordium, as contrary to all the rules of rhetoric, as to those more essential rules of policy which our situation would dictate, is intended as a prelude to a deadening and disheartening proposition; as if all that a minister had to fear in a war of his own conducting was that the people should pursue it with too ardent a zeal. Such a tone, as I guessed the minister would have taken, I am very sure, is the true, unsuborned, unsophisticated language of genuine, natural feeling, under the smart of patience exhausted and abused. Such a conduct as the facts stated in the declaration gave room to expect is that which true wisdom would have dictated under the impression of those genuine feelings. Never was there a jar or discord between genuine sentiment and sound policy. Never, no, never, did Nature say one thing and Wisdom say another. Nor are sentiments of elevation in themselves turgid and unnatural. Nature is never more truly herself, than in her grandest form. The Apollo of Belvedere (if the universal robber has yet left him at Belvedere) is as much in nature, as any figure from the pencil of Rembrandt, or any clown in the rustic revels of Teniers. Indeed it is when a great nation is in great difficulties, that minds must exalt themselves to the occasion, or all is lost. Strong passion under the direction of a feeble reason feeds a low fever, which serves only to destroy the body that entertains it. But vehement passion does not always indicate infirm judgment. It often accompanies, and actuates, and is even auxiliary to a powerful understanding; and when they both conspire and act harmoniously, their force is great to destroy disorder within, and to repel injury from abroad. If ever there was a time that calls on us for no vulgar conception of things, and for exertions in no vulgar strain, it is the awful hour that Providence has now appointed to this nation. Every little measure is a great error; and every great error will bring on no small ruin. Nothing

can be directed above the mark that we must aim at: everything below it is absolutely thrown away.

Except with the addition of the unheard-of insult offered to our ambassador by his rude expulsion, we are never to forget that the point on which the negotiation with De la Croix broke off, was exactly that which had stifled in its cradle the negotiation we had attempted with Barthélémy. Each of these transactions concluded with a manifesto upon our part; but the last of our manifestoes very materially differed from the first. The first declaration stated that '*nothing was left* but to prosecute a war *equally just and necessary*.' In the second, the justice and necessity of the war is dropped: the sentence, importing that nothing was left but the prosecution of such a war, disappears also. Instead of this resolution to prosecute the war, we sink into a whining lamentation on the abrupt termination of the treaty. We have nothing left but the last resource of female weakness, of helpless infancy, of doting decrepitude,—wailing and lamentation. We cannot even utter a sentiment of vigour—'his majesty has only to lament.' A poor possession to be left to a great monarch! Mark the effect produced on our councils by continued insolence and inveterate hostility! We grow more malleable under their blows. In reverential silence, we smother the cause and origin of the war. On that fundamental article of faith, we leave every one to abound in his own sense. In the minister's speech, glossing on the declaration, it is indeed mentioned; but very feebly. The lines are so faintly drawn as hardly to be traced. They only make a part of our *consolation* in the circumstances which we so dolefully lament. We rest our merits on the humility, the earnestness of solicitation, and the perfect good faith of those submissions, which have been used to persuade our regicide enemies to grant us some sort of peace. Not a word is said, which might not have been full as well said, and much better too, if the British nation had

appeared in the simple character of a penitent convinced of his errors and offences, and offering, by penances, by pilgrimages, and by all the modes of expiation ever devised by anxious, restless guilt, to make all the atonement in his miserable power.

The declaration ends, as I have before quoted it, with a solemn voluntary pledge, the most full and the most solemn that ever was given, of our resolution (if so it may be called) to enter again into the very same course. It requires nothing more of the regicides than to furnish some sort of excuse, some sort of colourable pretext, for our renewing the supplications of innocence at the feet of guilt. It leaves the moment of negotiation, a most important moment, to the choice of the enemy. He is to regulate it according to the convenience of his affairs. He is to bring it forward at that time when it may best serve to establish his authority at home, and to extend his power abroad. A dangerous assurance for this nation to give, whether it is broken, or whether it is kept. As all treaty was broken off, and broken off in the manner we have seen, the field of future conduct ought to be reserved free and unencumbered to our future discretion. As to the sort of condition prefixed to the pledge, namely, 'that the enemy should be disposed to enter into the work of general pacification with the spirit of reconciliation and equity,' this phraseology cannot possibly be considered otherwise, than as so many words thrown in to fill the sentence, and to round it to the ear. We prefixed the same plausible conditions to any renewal of the negotiation, in our manifesto on the rejection of our proposals at Basle. We did not consider those conditions as binding. We opened a much more serious negotiation without any sort of regard to them; and there is no new negotiation, which we can possibly open upon fewer indications of conciliation and equity, than were to be discovered, when we entered into our last at Paris. Any of the slightest pretences, any of the most loose, formal, equivocating expressions, would justify us under the

peroration of this piece, in again sending the last, or some other Lord Malmesbury to Paris.

I hope I misunderstand this pledge; or that we shall show no more regard to it, than we have done to all the faith that we have plighted to vigour and resolution in our former declaration. If I am to understand the conclusion of the declaration to be what unfortunately it seems to me, we make an engagement with the enemy, without any correspondent engagement on his side. We seem to have cut ourselves off from any benefit which an intermediate state of things might furnish to enable us totally to overturn that power, so little connected with moderation and justice. By holding out no hope, either to the justly discontented in France, or to any foreign power, and leaving the re-commencement of all treaty to this identical junto of assassins, we do in effect assure and guarantee to them the full possession of the rich fruits of their confiscations, of their murders of men, women, and children, and of all the multiplied, endless, nameless iniquities by which they have obtained their power. We guarantee to them the possession of a country, such and so situated as France, round, entire, immensely perhaps augmented.

Well! some will say, in this case we have only submitted to the nature of things. The nature of things is, I admit, a sturdy adversary. This might be alleged as a plea for our attempt at a treaty. But what plea of that kind can be alleged, after the treaty was dead and gone, in favour of this posthumous declaration? No necessity has driven us to *that* pledge. It is without a counterpart even in expectation. And what can be stated to obviate the evil which that solitary engagement must produce on the understanding or the fears of men? I ask, what have the regicides promised you in return, in case *you* should show what *they* would call dispositions to conciliation and equity, whilst you are giving that pledge from the throne and engaging parliament to counter-secure it? It is an awful consideration. It was on the very day of the

date of this wonderful pledge [1], in which we assumed the directorial government as lawful, and in which we engaged ourselves to treat with them whenever they pleased; it was on that very day the regicide fleet was weighing anchor from one of your harbours, where it had remained four days in perfect quiet. These harbours of the British dominions are the ports of France. They are of no use but to protect an enemy from our best allies, the storms of Heaven, and his own rashness. Had the *west* of Ireland been an unportuous coast, the French naval power would have been undone. The enemy uses the moment for hostility, without the least regard to your future disposition of equity and conciliation. They go out of what were once your harbours, and they return to them at their pleasure. Eleven days they had the full use of Bantry Bay, and at length their fleet returns from their harbour of Bantry to their harbour of Brest. Whilst you are invoking the propitious spirit of regicide equity and conciliation, they answer you with an attack. They turn out the pacific bearer of your 'how do you do's,' Lord Malmesbury; and they return your visit, and their 'thanks for your obliging inquiries,' by their old practised assassin *Hoche*. They come to attack—What? A town, a fort, a naval station? They come to attack your king, your constitution, and the very being of that parliament, which was holding out to them these pledges, together with the entireness of the empire, the laws, liberties, and properties of all the people. We know that they meditated the very same invasion, and for the very same purposes, upon this kingdom; and, had the coast been as opportune, would have effected it.

Whilst *you* are in vain torturing your invention to assure them of *your* sincerity and good faith, they have left no doubt concerning *their* good faith, and *their* sincerity towards those to whom they have engaged their honour. To their power they have been true

[1] December 27, 1796.

to the only pledge they have ever yet given to you, or to any of yours, I mean the solemn engagement which they entered into with the deputation of traitors who appeared at their bar, from England and from Ireland, in 1792. They have been true and faithful to the engagement which they made more largely; that is their engagement to give effectual aid to insurrection and treason, wherever they might appear in the world. We have seen the British declaration. This is the counter-declaration of the Directory. This is the reciprocal pledge which regicide amity gives to the conciliatory pledges of kings. But, thank God, such pledges cannot exist single. They have no counterpart; and if they had, the enemy's conduct cancels such declarations; and, I trust, along with them, cancels everything of mischief and dishonour that they contain.

There is one thing in this business which appears to be wholly unaccountable, or accountable on a supposition I dare not entertain for a moment. I cannot help asking, why all this pains, to clear the British nation of ambition, perfidy, and the insatiate thirst of war? At what period of time was it that our country has deserved that load of infamy, of which nothing but preternatural humiliation in language and conduct can serve to clear us? If we have deserved this kind of evil fame from anything we have done in a state of prosperity, I am sure that it is not an abject conduct in adversity that can clear our reputation. Well is it known that ambition can creep as well as soar. The pride of no person in a flourishing condition is more justly to be dreaded, than that of him who is mean and cringing under a doubtful and unprosperous fortune. But it seems it was thought necessary to give some out-of-the-way proofs of our sincerity, as well as of our freedom from ambition. Is then fraud and falsehood become the distinctive character of Englishmen? Whenever your enemy chooses to accuse you of perfidy and ill faith, will you put it into his power to throw you into the purgatory of self-

humiliation ? Is his charge equal to the finding of the grand jury of Europe, and sufficient to put you upon your trial ? But on that trial I will defend the English ministry. I am sorry that on some points I have, on the principles I have always opposed, so good a defence to make. They were not the first to begin the war. They did not excite the general confederacy in Europe, which was so properly formed on the alarm given by the Jacobinism of France. They did not begin with a hostile aggression on the regicides, or any of their allies. These parricides of their own country, disciplining themselves for foreign by domestic violence, were the first to attack a power that was our ally by nature, by habit, and by the sanction of multiplied treaties. Is it not true that they were the first to declare war upon this kingdom ? Is every word in the declaration from Downing Street, concerning their conduct, and concerning ours and that of our allies, so obviously false, that it is necessary to give some new invented proofs of our good faith in order to expunge the memory of all this perfidy ?

We know that over-labouring a point of this kind has the direct contrary effect from what we wish. We know that there is a legal presumption against men *quando se nimis purgitant* ; and if a charge of ambition is not refuted by an affected humility, certainly the character of fraud and perfidy is still less to be washed away by indications of meanness. Fraud and prevarication are servile vices. They sometimes grow out of the necessities, always out of the habits, of slavish and degenerate spirits : and on the theatre of the world, it is not by assuming the mask of a Davus or a Geta that an actor will obtain credit for manly simplicity and a liberal openness of proceeding. It is an erect countenance, it is a firm adherence to principle, it is a power of resisting false shame and frivolous fear, that assert our good faith and honour, and assure to us the confidence of mankind. Therefore all these negotiations, and all the declarations with which they were preceded and followed, can only serve to raise

presumptions against that good faith and public integrity, the fame of which to preserve inviolate is so much the interest and duty of every nation.

The pledge is an engagement 'to all Europe.' This is the more extraordinary, because it is a pledge, which no power in Europe, whom I have yet heard of, has thought proper to require at our hands. I am not in the secrets of office; and therefore I may be excused for proceeding upon probabilities and exterior indications. I have surveyed all Europe from the east to the west, from the north to the south, in search of this call upon us to purge ourselves of 'subtle *duplicity* and a *punic* style' in our proceedings. I have not heard that his excellency the Ottoman ambassador has expressed his doubts of the British sincerity in our negotiation with the most unchristian republic lately set up at our door. What sympathy, in that quarter, may have introduced a remonstrance upon the want of faith in this nation, I cannot positively say. If it exists, it is in Turkish or Arabic, and possibly is not yet translated. But none of the nations which compose the old Christian world have I yet heard as calling upon us for those judicial purgations and ordeals, by fire and water, which we have chosen to go through;—for the other great proof, by battle, we seem to decline.

For whose use, entertainment, or instruction, are all those over-strained and over-laboured proceedings in council, in negotiation, and in speeches in parliament, intended? What royal cabinet is to be enriched with these high-finished pictures of the arrogance of the sworn enemies of kings, and the meek patience of a British administration? In what heart is it intended to kindle pity towards our multiplied mortifications and disgraces? At best it is superfluous. What nation is unacquainted with the haughty disposition of the common enemy of all nations? It has been more than seen, it has been felt; not only by those who have been the victims of their imperious rapacity, but, in a degree, by those very powers who have consented to establish this robbery, that they

might be able to copy it, and with the impunity to make new usurpations of their own. The King of Prussia has hypothecated in trust to the regicides his rich and fertile territories on the Rhine, as a pledge of his zeal and affection to the cause of liberty and equality. He has seen them robbed with unbounded liberty, and with the most levelling equality. The woods are wasted, the country is ravaged, property is confiscated, and the people are put to bear a double yoke, in the exactions of a tyrannical government and in the contributions of a hostile irruption. Is it to satisfy the court of Berlin, that the court of London is to give the same sort of pledge of its sincerity and good faith to the French Directory? It is not that heart full of sensibility —it is not Luchesini, the minister of his Prussian majesty, the late ally of England, and the present ally of its enemy, who has demanded this pledge of our sincerity, as the price of renewal of the long lease of his sincere friendship to this kingdom.

It is not to our enemy, the now faithful ally of regicide, late the faithful ally of Great Britain, the Catholic king, that we address our doleful lamentation: it is not to the *Prince of Peace*, whose declaration of war was one of the first auspicious omens of general tranquillity, which our dove-like ambassador, with the olive-branch in his beak, was saluted with at his entrance into the ark of clean birds at Paris.

Surely it is not to the Tetrarch of Sardinia, now the faithful ally of a power who has seized upon all his fortresses, and confiscated the oldest dominions of his house; it is not to this once powerful, once respected, and once cherished ally of Great Britain, that we mean to prove the sincerity of the peace which we offered to make at his expense. Or is it to him we are to prove the arrogance of the power who, under the name of friend, oppresses him and the poor remains of his subjects, with all the ferocity of the most cruel enemy?

It is not to Holland, under the name of an ally, laid under a permanent military contribution, filled with

their double garrison of barbarous Jacobin troops, and ten times more barbarous Jacobin clubs and assemblies, that we find ourselves obliged to give this pledge.

Is it to Genoa, that we make this kind promise; a state which the regicides were to defend in a favourable neutrality, but whose neutrality has been, by the gentle influence of Jacobin authority, forced into the trammels of an alliance; whose alliance has been secured by the admission of French garrisons; and whose peace has been for ever ratified by a forced declaration of war against ourselves?

It is not the Grand Duke of Tuscany who claims this declaration; not the grand duke, who for his early sincerity, for his love of peace, and for his entire confidence in the amity of the assassins of his house, has been complimented in the British parliament with the name of '*the wisest sovereign in Europe*:'—it is not this pacific Solomon, or his philosophic, cudgelled ministry, cudgelled by English and by French, whose wisdom and philosophy between them have placed Leghorn in the hands of the enemy of the Austrian family, and driven the only profitable commerce of Tuscany from its only port. It is not this sovereign, a far more able statesman than any of the *Medici* in whose chair he sits: it is not the philosopher *Carletti*, more ably speculative than *Galileo*, more profoundly politic than *Machiavel*, that call upon us so loudly to give the same happy proofs of the same good faith to the republic, always the same, always one and indivisible.

It is not Venice, whose principal cities the enemy has appropriated to himself, and scornfully desired the state to indemnify itself from the emperor, that we wish to convince of the pride and the despotism of an enemy, who loads us with his scoffs and buffets.

It is not for his holiness we intend this consolatory declaration of our own weakness, and of the tyrannous temper of his grand enemy. That prince has known both the one and the other from the beginning. The

artists of the French revolution had given their very first essays and sketches of robbery and desolation against his territories, in a far more cruel 'murdering piece' than had ever entered into the imagination of painter or poet. Without ceremony they tore from his cherishing arms the possessions which he held for five hundred years, undisturbed by all the ambition of all the ambitious monarchs who, during that period, have reigned in France. Is it to him, in whose wrong we have in our late negotiation ceded his now unhappy countries near the Rhone, lately, amongst the most flourishing (perhaps the most flourishing for their extent) of all the countries upon earth, that we are to prove the sincerity of our resolution to make peace with the republic of barbarism? That venerable potentate and pontiff is sunk deep into the vale of years; he is half disarmed by his peaceful character; his dominions are more than half disarmed by a peace of two hundred years, defended as they were, not by force, but by reverence; yet in all these straits, we see him display, amidst the recent ruins and the new defacements of his plundered capital, along with the mild and decorated piety of the modern, all the spirit and magnanimity of ancient Rome! Does he, who, though himself unable to defend them, nobly refused to receive pecuniary compensations for the protection he owed to his people of Avignon, Carpentras, and the Venaisin;—does he want proofs of our good disposition to deliver over that people without any security for them, or any compensation to their sovereign, to this cruel enemy? Does he want to be satisfied of the sincerity of our humiliation to France, who has seen his free, fertile, and happy city and state of Bologna, the cradle of regenerated law, the seat of sciences and of arts, so hideously metamorphosed, whilst he was crying to Great Britain for aid, and offering to purchase that aid at any price? Is it him, who sees that chosen spot of plenty and delight converted into a Jacobin ferocious republic, dependent on the homicides of France? is it him, who, from the miracles of his

beneficent industry, has done a work which defied the power of the Roman emperors, though with an enthralled world to labour for them; is it him, who has drained and cultivated the *Pontine Marshes*, that we are to satisfy of our cordial spirit of conciliation, with those who, in their equity, are restoring Holland again to the seas, whose maxims poison more than the exhalations of the most deadly fens, and who turn all the fertilities of nature and of art into a howling desert? Is it to him, that we are to demonstrate the good faith of our submissions to the cannibal republic; to him who is commanded to deliver into their hands Ancona and Civita Vecchia, seats of commerce, raised by the wise and liberal labours and expenses of the present and late pontiffs; ports not more belonging to the ecclesiastical state than to the commerce of Great Britain; thus wresting from his hands the power of the keys of the centre of Italy, as before they had taken possession of the keys of the northern part, from the hands of the unhappy King of Sardinia, the natural ally of England? Is it to him we are to prove our good faith in the peace which we are soliciting to receive from the hands of his and our robbers, the enemies of all arts, all sciences, all civilization, and all commerce?

Is it to the Cispadane or to the Transpadane republics, which have been forced to bow under the galling yoke of French liberty, that we address all these pledges of our sincerity and love of peace with their unnatural parents?

Are we by this declaration to satisfy the King of Naples whom we have left to struggle as he can, after our abdication of Corsica, and the flight of the whole naval force of England out of the whole circuit of the Mediterranean, abandoning our allies, our commerce, and the honour of a nation, once the protectress of all other nations, because strengthened by the independence, and enriched by the commerce of them all? By the express provisions of a recent treaty, we had engaged with the King of Naples to keep a naval force

in the Mediterranean. But, good God! was a treaty at all necessary for this? The uniform policy of this kingdom as a state, and eminently so as a commercial state, has at all times led us to keep a powerful squadron and a commodious naval station in that central sea, which borders upon, and which connects a far greater number and variety of states, European, Asiatic, and African, than any other. Without such a naval force, France must become despotic mistress of that sea, and of all the countries whose shores it washes. Our commerce must become vassal to her, and dependent on her will. Since we are come no longer to trust to our force in arms, but to our dexterity in negotiation, and begin to pay a desperate court to a proud and coy usurpation, and have finally sent an ambassador to the Bourbon regicides at Paris; the King of Naples, who saw that no reliance was to be placed on our engagements, or on any pledge of our adherence to our nearest and dearest interests, has been obliged to send his ambassador also to join the rest of the squalid tribe of the representatives of degraded kings. This monarch, surely, does not want any proof of the sincerity of our amicable dispositions to that amicable republic, into whose arms he has been given by our desertion of him.

To look to the powers of the north, it is not to the Danish ambassador, insolently treated in his own character and in ours, that we are to give proofs of the regicide arrogance, and of our disposition to submit to it.

With regard to Sweden, I cannot say much. The French influence is struggling with her independence; and they who consider the manner in which the ambassador of that power was treated not long since at Paris, and the manner in which the father of the present King of Sweden (himself the victim of regicide principles and passions) would have looked on the present assassins of France, will not be very prompt to believe that the young King of Sweden has made this kind of requisition to the King of Great Britain, and

has given this kind of auspice of his new government.

I speak last of the most important of all. It certainly was not the last empress of Russia at whose instance we have given this pledge. It is not the new emperor, the inheritor of so much glory, and placed in a situation of so much delicacy and difficulty for the preservation of that inheritance, who calls on England, the natural ally of his dominions, to deprive herself of her power of action, and to bind herself to France. France at no time, and in none of its fashions, least of all in its last, has been ever looked upon as the friend either of Russia or of Great Britain. Everything good, I trust, is to be expected from this prince; whatever may be without authority, given out of an influence over his mind possessed by that only potentate, from whom he has anything to apprehend, or with whom he has much even to discuss.

This sovereign knows, I have no doubt, and feels, on what sort of bottom is to be laid the foundation of a Russian throne. He knows what a rock of native granite is to form the pedestal of his statue, who is to emulate Peter the Great. His renown will be in continuing with ease and safety, what his predecessor was obliged to achieve through mighty struggles. He is sensible that his business is not to innovate, but to secure and to establish; that reformations at this day are attempts at best of ambiguous utility. He will revere his father with the piety of a son; but in his government he will imitate the policy of his mother. His father, with many excellent qualities, had a short reign; because, being a native Russian, he was unfortunately advised to act in the spirit of a foreigner. His mother reigned over Russia three-and-thirty years with the greatest glory; because, with the disadvantage of being a foreigner born, she made herself a Russian. A wise prince like the present will improve his country; but it will be cautiously and progressively upon its own native groundwork of religion, manners, habitudes, and alliances. If I prognosticate right, it

is not the Emperor of Russia that ever will call for extravagant proofs of our desire to reconcile ourselves to the irreconcilable enemy of all thrones.

I do not know why I should not include America among the European powers, because she is of European origin; and has not yet, like France, destroyed all traces of manners, laws, opinions, and usages, which she drew from Europe. As long as that Europe shall have any possessions either in the southern or the northern parts of that America, even separated as it is by the ocean, it must be considered as a part of the European system. It is not America, menaced with internal ruin from the attempts to plant Jacobinism instead of liberty in that country; it is not America, whose independence is directly attacked by the French, the enemies of the independence of all nations, that calls upon us to give security by disarming ourselves in a treacherous peace. By such a peace, we shall deliver the Americans, their liberty, and their order, without resource, to the mercy of their imperious allies, who will have peace or neutrality with no state, which is not ready to join her in war against England.

Having run round the whole circle of the European system wherever it acts, I must affirm that all the foreign powers who are not leagued with France for the utter destruction of all balance through Europe and throughout the world, demand other assurances from this kingdom than are given in that declaration. They require assurances, not of the sincerity of our good dispositions towards the usurpation in France, but of our affection towards the college of the ancient states of Europe, and pledges of our constancy, our fidelity, and of our fortitude in resisting to the last the power that menaces them all. The apprehension from which they wish to be delivered cannot be from anything they dread in the ambition of England. Our power must be their strength. They hope more from us than they fear. I am sure the only ground of their hope, and of our hope, is in the greatness of mind hitherto shown by the people of this nation,

and its adherence to the unalterable principles of its ancient policy, whatever government may finally prevail in France. I have entered into this detail of the wishes and expectations of the European powers, in order to point out more clearly, not so much what their disposition, as (a consideration of far greater importance) what their situation demands, according as that situation is related to the regicide republic and to this kingdom.

Then if it is not to satisfy the foreign powers we make this assurance, to what power at home is it that we pay all this humiliating court? Not to the old Whigs or to the ancient Tories of this kingdom? if any memory of such ancient divisions still exists amongst us. To which of the principles of these parties is this assurance agreeable? Is it to the Whigs we are to recommend the aggrandizement of France, and the subversion of the balance of power? Is it to the Tories we are to recommend our eagerness to cement ourselves with the enemies of royalty and religion? But if these parties, which by their dissensions have so often distracted the kingdom, which by their union have once saved it, and which by their collision and mutual resistance have preserved the variety of this constitution in its unity, be (as I believe they are) nearly extinct by the growth of new ones, which have their roots in the present circumstances of the times—I wish to know, to which of these new descriptions this declaration is addressed? It can hardly be to those persons, who, in the new distribution of parties, consider the conservation in England of the ancient order of things as necessary to preserve order everywhere else, and who regard the general conservation of order in other countries as reciprocally necessary to preserve the same state of things in these islands. That party never can wish to see great Britain pledge herself to give the lead and the ground of advantage and superiority to the France of to-day, in any treaty which is to settle Europe. I insist upon it, that, so far from expecting such an engagement, they are

generally stupefied and confounded with it That the other party which demands great changes here, and is so pleased to see them everywhere else, which party I call Jacobin, that this faction does, from the bottom of its heart, approve the declaration, and does erect its crest upon the engagement, there can be little doubt. To them it may be addressed with propriety, for it answers their purposes in every point.

The party in opposition within the House of Lords and Commons, it is irreverent, and half a breach of privilege (far from my thoughts), to consider as Jacobin. This party has always denied the existence of such a faction; and has treated the machinations of those, whom you and I call Jacobins, as so many forgeries and fictions of the minister and his adherents, to find a pretext for destroying freedom, and setting up an arbitrary power in this kingdom. However, whether this minority has a leaning towards the French system, or only a charitable toleration of those who lean that way, it is certain that they have always attacked the sincerity of the minister in the same modes, and on the very same grounds, and nearly in the same terms, with the Directory. It must, therefore, be at the tribunal of the minority (from the whole tenor of the speech), that the minister appeared to consider himself obliged to purge himself of duplicity. It was at their bar that he held up his hand. It was on their *sellette* that he seemed to answer interrogatories; it was on their principles that he defended his whole conduct. They certainly take what the French call the *haute du pavé*. They have loudly called for the negotiation. It was accorded to them. They engaged their support of the war with vigour, in case peace was not granted on honourable terms. Peace was not granted on any terms, honourable or shameful. Whether these judges, few in number but powerful in jurisdiction, are satisfied; whether they, to whom this new pledge is hypothecated, have redeemed their own; whether they have given one particle more of their support to ministry,

or even favoured them with their good opinion, or their candid construction, I leave it to those, who recollect that memorable debate, to determine.

The fact is, that neither this declaration, nor the negotiation which is its subject, could serve any one good purpose, foreign or domestic; it could conduce to no end either with regard to allies or neutrals. It tends neither to bring back the misled: nor to give courage to the fearful; nor to animate and confirm those who are hearty and zealous in the cause.

I hear it has been said (though I can scarcely believe it) by a distinguished person in an assembly, where if there be less of the torrent and tempest of eloquence, more guarded expression is to be expected, that, indeed, there was no just ground of hope in this business from the beginning.

It is plain that this noble person, however conversant in negotiation, having been employed in no less than four embassies, and in two hemispheres, and in one of those negotiations having fully experienced what it was to proceed to treaty without previous encouragement, was not at all consulted in this experiment. For his majesty's principal minister declared, on the very same day, in another house, 'his majesty's deep and sincere regret at its unfortunate and abrupt termination, so different from the wishes and *hopes* that were entertained;'—and in other parts of the speech speaks of this abrupt termination as a great disappointment, and as a fall from sincere endeavours and sanguine expectation. Here are, indeed, sentiments diametrically opposite, as to the hopes with which the negotiation was commenced and carried on, and what is curious is, the grounds of the hopes on the one side, and the despair on the other, are exactly the same. The logical conclusion from the common premises is, indeed, in favour of the noble lord, for they are agreed that the enemy was far from giving the least degree of countenance to any such hopes: and that they proceeded, in spite of every discouragement which the enemy had thrown in their

way. But there is another material point in which they do not seem to differ: that is to say, the result of the desperate experiment of the noble lord, and of the promising attempt of the great minister, in satisfying the people of England, and in causing discontent to the people of France; or, as the minister expresses it, 'in uniting England and in dividing France.'

For my own part, though I perfectly agreed with the noble lord that the attempt was desperate, so desperate indeed, as to deserve *his* name of an experiment, yet no fair man can possibly doubt that the minister was perfectly sincere in his proceeding, and that, from his ardent wishes for peace with the regicides, he was led to conceive hopes which were founded rather in his vehement desires, than in any rational ground of political speculation. Convinced as I am of this, it had been better, in my humble opinion, that persons of great name and authority had abstained from those topics which had been used to call the minister's sincerity into doubt, and had not adopted the sentiments of the Directory upon the subject of all our negotiations; for the noble lord expressly says that the experiment was made for the satisfaction of the country. The Directory says exactly the same thing. Upon granting, in consequence of our supplications, the passport to Lord Malmesbury, in order to remove all sort of hope from its success, they charged all our previous steps, even to that moment of submissive demand to be admitted to their presence, on duplicity and perfidy; and assumed that the object of all the steps we had taken, was that 'of justifying the continuance of the war in the eyes of the English nation, and of throwing all the odium of it upon the French: '—'The English nation' (said they) 'supports impatiently the continuance of the war, and *a reply must be made to its complaints and its reproaches*; the parliament is about to be opened, *and the mouths of the orators who will declaim against the war must be shut; the demands for new taxes must be justified; and to obtain these results, it is necessary to be able to advance*

that the French government refuses every reasonable proposition for peace.' I am sorry that the language of the friends to ministry and the enemies to mankind should be so much in unison.

As to the fact in which these parties are so well agreed that the experiment ought to have been made for the satisfaction of this country (meaning the country of England), it were well to be wished that persons of eminence would cease to make themselves representatives of the people of England, without a letter of attorney, or any other act of procuration. In legal construction, the sense of the people of England is to be collected from the House of Commons; and, though I do not deny the possibility of an abuse of this trust as well as any other, yet I think that, without the most weighty reasons, and in the most urgent exigencies, it is highly dangerous to suppose that the House speaks anything contrary to the sense of the people, or that the representative is silent when the sense of the constituent, strongly, decidedly, and upon long deliberation, speaks audibly upon any topic of moment. If there is a doubt whether the House of Commons represents perfectly the whole Commons of Great Britain (I think there is none), there can be no question but that the Lords and the Commons together represent the sense of the whole people to the crown, and to the world. Thus it is, when we speak legally and constitutionally. In a great measure, it is equally true, when we speak prudentially; but I do not pretend to assert that there are no other principles to guide discretion than those which are or can be fixed by some law, or some constitution; yet before the legally presumed sense of the people should be superseded by a supposition of one more real (as in all cases, where a legal presumption is to be ascertained), some strong proofs ought to exist of a contrary disposition in the people at large, and some decisive indications of their desire upon this subject. There can be no question, that previously to a direct message from the crown neither House of Parliament did indicate any-

thing like a wish for such advances as we have made, or such negotiations as we have carried on. The parliament has assented to ministry; it is not ministry that has obeyed the impulse of parliament. The people at large have their organs through which they can speak to parliament and to the crown by a respectful petition, and though not with absolute authority, yet with weight, they can instruct their representatives. The freeholders and other electors in this kingdom have another and a surer mode of expressing their sentiments concerning the conduct which is held by members of parliament. In the middle of these transactions, this last opportunity has been held out to them. In all these points of view I positively assert that the people have nowhere, and in no way, expressed their wish of throwing themselves and their sovereign at the feet of a wicked and rancorous foe, to supplicate mercy, which, from the nature of that foe, and from the circumstances of affairs, we had no sort of ground to expect. It is undoubtedly the business of ministers very much to consult the inclinations of the people, but they ought to take great care that they do not receive that inclination from the few persons who may happen to approach them. The petty interests of such gentlemen, the low conceptions of things, their fears arising from the danger to which the very arduous and critical situation of public affairs may expose their places: their apprehensions from the hazards to which the discontents of a few popular men at elections may expose their seats in parliament; all these causes trouble and confuse the representations which they make to ministers of the real temper of the nation. If ministers, instead of following the great indications of the constitution, proceed on such reports, they will take the whispers of a cabal for the voice of the people, and the counsels of imprudent timidity for the wisdom of a nation.

I well remember that, when the fortune of the war began, and it began pretty early, to turn, as it is common and natural, we were dejected by the losses

that had been sustained, and with the doubtful issue of the contests that were foreseen. But not a word was uttered that supposed peace, upon any proper terms, was in our power, or therefore that it should be in our desire. As usual, with or without reason, we criticized the conduct of the war, and compared our fortunes with our measures. The mass of the nation went no further. For I suppose that you always understood me as speaking of that very preponderating part of the nation, which had always been equally adverse to the French principles, and to the general progress of their revolution throughout Europe; considering the final success of their arms and the triumph of their principles as one and the same thing.

The first means that were used, by any one professing our principles, to change the minds of this party upon that subject, appeared in a small pamphlet circulated with considerable industry. It was commonly given to the noble person himself, who has passed judgment upon all hopes from negotiation, and justified our late abortive attempt only as an experiment made to satisfy the country, and yet that pamphlet led the way in endeavouring to dissatisfy that very country with the continuance of the war, and to raise in the people the most sanguine expectations from some such course of negotiation as has been fatally pursued. This leads me to suppose (and I am glad to have reason for supposing) that there was no foundation for attributing the performance in question to that author; but without mentioning his name in the title-page, it passed for his, and does still pass uncontradicted. It was entitled 'Remarks on the apparent Circumstances of the War in the fourth Week of October, 1795.'

This sanguine little kingfisher (not prescient of the storm, as by his instinct he ought to be) appearing at that uncertain season before the rigs of old Michaelmas were yet well composed, and when the inclement storms of winter were approaching, began to flicker over the seas, and was busy in building its halcyon nest, as if the angry ocean had been soothed by the

genial breath of May. Very unfortunately this auspice was instantly followed by a speech from the throne, in the very spirit and principles of that pamphlet.

I say nothing of the newspapers, which are undoubtedly in the interest, and which are supposed by some to be directly or indirectly under the influence, of ministers, and which, with less authority than the pamphlet I speak of, had indeed for some time before held a similar language, in direct contradiction to their more early tone: insomuch, that I can speak it with a certain assurance, that very many, who wished to administration as well as you and I do, thought that in giving their opinion in favour of this peace, they followed the opinion of ministry—they were conscious that they did not lead it. My inference therefore is this, that the negotiation, whatever its merits may be, in the general principle and policy of undertaking it, is, what every political measure in general ought to be, the sole work of administration; and that if it was an experiment to satisfy anybody, it was to satisfy those, whom the ministers were in the daily habit of condemning, and by whom they were daily condemned; I mean, the *leaders* of the *opposition* in *parliament*. I am certain that the ministers were then, and are now, invested with the fullest confidence of the major part of the nation, to pursue such measures of peace or war as the nature of things shall suggest as most adapted to the public safety. It is in this light, therefore, as a measure which ought to have been avoided, and ought not to be repeated, that I take the liberty of discussing the merits of this system of regicide negotiations. It is not a matter of light experiment that leaves us where it found us. Peace or war are the great hinges upon which the very being of nations turns. Negotiations are the means of making peace or preventing war, and are therefore of more serious importance than almost any single event of war can possibly be.

At the very outset I do not hesitate to affirm that this country in particular, and the public law in

general, have suffered more by this negotiation of experiment, than by all the battles together that we have lost from the commencement of this century to this time, when it touches so nearly to its close. I therefore have the misfortune not to coincide in opinion with the great statesman who set on foot a negotiation, as he said, 'in spite of the constant opposition he had met with from France.' He admits, 'that the difficulty in this negotiation became most seriously increased indeed, by the situation in which we were placed, and the manner in which alone the enemy would *admit* of a negotiation.' This situation so described, and so truly described, rendered our solicitation not only degrading, but from the very outset evidently hopeless.

I find it asserted, and even a merit taken for it, 'that this country surmounted every difficulty of form and etiquette which the enemy had thrown in our way.' An odd way of surmounting a difficulty by cowering under it! I find it asserted that a heroic resolution had been taken, and avowed in parliament, previous to this negotiation, 'that no consideration of etiquette should stand in the way of it.'

Etiquette, if I understand rightly the term, which in any extent is of modern usage, had its original application to those ceremonial and formal observances practised at courts, which had been established by long usage, in order to preserve the sovereign power from the rude intrusion of licentious familiarity, as well as to preserve majesty itself from a disposition to consult its ease at the expense of its dignity. The term came afterwards to have a greater latitude, and to be employed to signify certain formal methods used in the transactions between sovereign states.

In the more limited as well as in the larger sense of the term, without knowing what the etiquette is, it is impossible to determine whether it is a vain and captious punctilio, or a form necessary to preserve decorum in character and order in business. I readily admit that nothing tends to facilitate the issue of all

public transactions more than a mutual disposition, in the parties treating, to waive all ceremony. But the use of this temporary suspension of the recognized modes of respect consists in its being mutual, and in the spirit of conciliation, in which all ceremony is laid aside. On the contrary, when one of the parties to a treaty intrenches himself up to the chin in these ceremonies, and will not, on his side, abate a single punctilio, and that all the concessions are upon one side only, the party so conceding does by this act place himself in a relation of inferiority, and thereby fundamentally subverts that equality which is of the very essence of all treaty.

After this formal act of degradation, it was but a matter of course that gross insult should be offered to our ambassador, and that he should tamely submit to it. He found himself provoked to complain of the atrocious libels against his public characters and his person, which appeared in a paper under the avowed patronage of that government. The regicide Directory, on this complaint, did not recognize the paper; and that was all. They did not punish, they did not dismiss, they did not even reprimand, the writer. As to our ambassador, this total want of reparations for the injury was passed by under the pretence of despising it.

In this but too serious business, it is not possible here to avoid a smile. Contempt is not a thing to be despised. It may be borne with a calm and equal mind, but no man by lifting his head high can pretend that he does not perceive the scorns that are poured down upon him from above. All these sudden complaints of injury, and all these deliberate submissions to it, are the inevitable consequences of the situation in which we had placed ourselves; a situation wherein the insults were such as nature would not enable us to bear, and circumstances would not permit us to resent.

It was not long, however, after this contempt of contempt upon the part of our ambassador (who by the

way represented his sovereign) that a new object was furnished for displaying sentiments of the same kind, though the case was infinitely aggravated. Not the ambassador, but the king himself was libelled and insulted; libelled, not by a creature of the Directory, but by the Directory itself. At least so Lord Malmesbury understood it, and so he answered it in his note of the 12th December, 1796, in which he says, 'With regard to the *offensive and injurious* insinuations which are contained in that paper, and which are only calculated to throw new obstacles in the way of that accommodation, which the French government profess to desire, THE KING HAS DEEMED IT FAR BENEATH HIS DIGNITY to permit an answer to be made to them on his part, in any manner whatsoever.'

I am of opinion, that if his majesty had kept aloof from that wash and off-scouring of everything that is low and barbarous in the world, it might be well thought unworthy of his dignity to take notice of such scurrilities. They must be considered as much the natural expression of that kind of animal, as it is the expression of the feelings of a dog to bark; but when the king had been advised to recognize not only the monstrous composition as a sovereign power, but, in conduct, to admit something in it like a superiority; when the bench of regicide was made, at least, co-ordinate with his throne, and raised upon a platform full as elevated, this treatment could not be passed by under the appearance of despising it. It would not, indeed, have been proper to keep up a war of the same kind, but an immediate, manly, and decided resentment ought to have been the consequence. We ought not to have waited for the disgraceful dismissal of our ambassador. There are cases in which we may pretend to sleep; but the wittol rule has some sense in it, *Non omnibus dormio.* We might, however, have seemed ignorant of the affront; but what was the fact? Did we dissemble or pass it by in silence? When dignity is talked of, a language which I did not expect to hear in such a transaction, I must say what all the world

must feel, that it was not for the king's dignity to notice this insult, and not to resent it. This mode of proceeding is formed on new ideas of the correspondence between sovereign powers.

This was far from the only ill effect of the policy of degradation. The state of inferiority in which we were placed in this vain attempt at treaty, drove us headlong from error into error, and led us to wander far away, not only from the old paths which have been beaten in the whole course of political communication between mankind, but out of the ways even of the most common prudence. Against all rules, after we had met nothing but rebuffs in return to all our proposals, we made *two confidential communications* to those in whom we had no confidence, and who reposed no confidence in us. What was worse, we were fully aware of the madness of the step we were taking. Ambassadors are not sent to a hostile power, persevering in sentiments of hostility, to make candid, confidential, and amicable communications. Hitherto the world has considered it as the duty of an ambassador in such a situation to be cautious, guarded, dexterous, and circumspect. It is true that mutual confidence and common interest dispense with all rules, smooth the rugged way, remove every obstacle, and make all things plain and level. When, in the last century, *Temple* and *De Witt* negotiated the famous Triple Alliance, their candour, their freedom, and the most *confidential* disclosures, were the result of true policy. Accordingly, in spite of all the dilatory forms of the complex government of the United Provinces, the treaty was concluded in three days. It did not take a much longer time to bring the same state (that of Holland) through a still more complicated transaction, that of the *Grand Alliance*. But in the present case, this unparalleled candour, this unpardonable want of reserve, produced, what might have been expected from it, the most serious evils. It instructed the enemy in the whole plan of our demands and concessions. It made the most fatal discoveries.

And first, it induced us to lay down the basis of a treaty which itself had nothing to rest upon; it seems, we thought we had gained a great point in getting this basis admitted—that is, a basis of mutual compensation and exchange of conquests. If a disposition to peace, and with any reasonable assurance, had been previously indicated, such a plan of arrangement might with propriety and safety be proposed, because these arrangements were not, in effect, to make the basis, but a part of the superstructure of the fabric of pacification. The order of things would thus be reversed. The mutual disposition to peace would form the reasonable base, upon which the scheme of compensation upon one side or other might be constructed. This truly fundamental base being once laid, all differences arising from the spirit of huckstering and barter might be easily adjusted. If the restoration of peace, with a view to the establishment of a fair balance of power in Europe, had been made the real basis of the treaty, the reciprocal value of the compensations could not be estimated according to their proportion to each other, but according to their proportionate relation to that end: to that great end the whole would be subservient. The effect of the treaty would be in a manner secured before the detail of particulars was begun, and for a plain reason, because the hostile spirit on both sides had been conjured down; but if, in the full fury, and unappeased rancour of war, a little traffic is attempted, it is easy to divine what must be the consequence to those who endeavoured to open that kind of petty commerce.

To illustrate what I have said, I go back no further than to the two last treaties of Paris, and to the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which preceded the first of these two treaties of Paris by about fourteen or fifteen years. I do not mean here to criticize any of them. My opinions upon some particulars of the treaty of Paris in 1763, are published in a pamphlet,[1] which your

[1] 'Observations on a late state of the nation.' (See Vol. I of this Edition of Burke's works.)

recollection will readily bring into your view. I recur to them only to show that their basis had not been, and never could have been, a mere dealing of truck and barter, but that the parties being willing, from common fatigue or common suffering, to put an end to a war, the first object of which had either been obtained or despaired of, the lesser objects were not thought worth the price of further contest. The parties understanding one another, so much was given away without considering from whose budget it came, not as the value of the objects, but as the value of peace to the parties might require. At the last treaty of Paris the subjugation of America being despaired of on the part of Great Britain, and the independence of America being looked upon as secure on the part of France, the main cause of the war was removed; and the conquests which France had made upon us (for we had made none of importance upon her) were surrendered with sufficient facility. Peace was restored as peace. In America the parties stood as they were possessed. A limit was to be settled, but settled as a limit to secure that peace, and not at all on a system of equivalents, for which, as we then stood with the United States, there were little or no materials.

At the preceding treaty of Paris, I mean that of 1763, there was nothing at all on which to fix a basis of compensation from reciprocal cession of conquests. They were all on one side. The question with us was not what we were to receive, and on what consideration, but what we were to keep for indemnity, or to cede for peace. Accordingly no place being left for barter, sacrifices were made on our side to peace; and we surrendered to the French their most valuable possessions in the West Indies without any equivalent. The rest of Europe fell soon after into its ancient order; and the German war ended exactly where it had begun.

The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle was built upon a similar basis. All the conquests in Europe had been made by France. She had subdued the Austrian Netherlands,

and broken open the gates of Holland. We had taken nothing in the West Indies; and Cape Breton was a trifling business indeed. France gave up all for peace. The allies had given up all that was ceded at Utrecht. Louis XIV made all, or nearly all, the cessions at Ryswick, and at Nimeguen. In all those treaties, and in all the preceding, as well as in the others which intervened, the question never had been that of barter. The balance of power had been ever assumed as the known common law of Europe at all times, and by all powers: the question had only been (as it must happen) on the more or less inclination of that balance.

This general balance was regarded in four principal points of view:—the GREAT MIDDLE BALANCE, which comprehended Great Britain, France, and Spain; the BALANCE OF THE NORTH; the BALANCE, external and internal, of GERMANY; and the BALANCE OF ITALY. In all those systems of balance, England was the power to whose custody it was thought it might be most safely committed.

France, as she happened to stand, secured the balance, or endangered it. Without question she had been long the security for the balance of Germany, and, under her auspices, the system, if not formed, had been at least perfected. She was so in some measure with regard to Italy, more than occasionally. She had a clear interest in the balance of the north, and had endeavoured to preserve it. But when we began to treat with the present France, or more properly to prostrate ourselves to her, and to try if we should be admitted to ransom our allies, upon a system of mutual concession and compensation, we had not one of the usual facilities. For, first, we had not the smallest indication of a desire for peace on the part of the enemy; but rather the direct contrary. Men do not make sacrifices to obtain what they do not desire; and, as for the balance of power, it was so far from being admitted by France either on the general system, or with regard to the particular systems that I have mentioned, that in the whole body of their authorized

or encouraged reports and discussions upon the theory of the diplomatic system, they constantly rejected the very idea of the balance of power, and treated it as the true cause of all the wars and calamities that had afflicted Europe; and their practice was correspondent to the dogmatic positions they had laid down. The empire and the papacy it was their great object to destroy; and this, now openly avowed and steadfastly acted upon, might have been discerned with very little acuteness of sight, from the very first dawnings of the revolution, to be the main drift of their policy. For they professed a resolution to destroy everything which can hold states together by the tie of opinion.

Exploding, therefore, all sorts of balances, they avow their design to erect themselves into a new description of empire, which is not grounded on any balance, but forms a sort of impious hierarchy, of which France is to be the head and the guardian. The law of this their empire is anything rather than the public law of Europe, the ancient conventions of its several states, or the ancient opinions which assign to them superiority or pre-eminence of any sort, or any other kind of connexion in virtue of ancient relations. They permit, and that is all, the temporary existence of some of the old communities: but whilst they give to these tolerated states this temporary respite in order to secure them in a condition of real dependence on themselves, they invest them on every side by a body of republics, formed on the model, and dependent ostensibly, as well as substantially, on the will of the mother republic, to which they owe their origin. These are to be so many garrisons to check and control the states, which are to be permitted to remain on the old model, until they are ripe for a change. It is in this manner, that France, on her new system, means to form an universal empire, by producing an universal revolution. By this means, forming a new code of communities according to what she calls the natural rights of man and of states, she pretends to secure eternal peace to the world, guaranteed by her generosity and justice, which are to

grow with the extent of her power. To talk of the balance of power to the governors of such a country, was a jargon which they could not understand even through an interpreter. Before men can transact any affair, they must have a common language to speak, and some common, recognized principles, on which they can argue; otherwise all is cross-purpose and confusion. It was, therefore, an essential preliminary to the whole proceeding, to fix, whether the balance of power, the liberties and laws of the empire, and the treaties of different belligerent powers in past times, when they put an end to hostilities, were to be considered as the basis of the present negotiation.

The whole of the enemy's plan was known when Lord Malmesbury was sent with his scrap of equivalents to Paris. Yet, in this unfortunate attempt at negotiation, instead of fixing these points, and assuming the balance of power and the peace of Europe as the basis to which all cessions on all sides were to be subservient, our solicitor for peace was directed to reverse that order. He was directed to make mutual concessions, on a mere comparison of their remarkable value, the base of treaty. The balance of power was to be thrown in as an inducement, and a sort of make-weight to supply the manifest deficiency, which must stare him and the world in the face, between those objects which he was to require the enemy to surrender, and those which he had to offer as a fair equivalent.

To give any force to this inducement, and to make it answer even a secondary purpose of equalizing equivalents having in themselves no natural proportionate value, it is supposed that the enemy, contrary to the most notorious fact, did admit this balance of power to be of some value, great or small; whereas it is plain that, in the enemy's estimate of things, the consideration of the balance of power, as we have said before, was so far from going in diminution of the value of what the Directory was desired to surrender, or of giving an additional price to our objects offered in exchange, that the hope of the utter destruction

of that balance became a new motive to the junto regicides for preserving, as a means for realizing that hope, which we wished them to abandon.

Thus stood the basis of the treaty on laying the first stone of the foundation. At the very best, upon our side, the question stood upon a mere naked bargain and sale. Unthinking people here triumphed when they thought they had obtained it, whereas when obtained as a basis of treaty, it was just the worst we could possibly have chosen. As to our offer to cede a most unprofitable, and, indeed, beggarly, chargeable counting-house or two in the East Indies, we ought not to presume that they could consider this as anything else than a mockery. As to anything of real value, we had nothing under heaven to offer (for which we were not ourselves in a very dubious struggle) except the island of Martinico only. When this object was to be weighed against the directorial conquests, merely as an object of a value at market, the principle of barter became perfectly ridiculous; a single quarter in the single city of Amsterdam was worth ten Martinicos; and would have sold for many more years' purchase in any market overt in Europe. How was this gross and glaring defect in the objects of exchange to be supplied?—It was to be made up by argument. And what was that argument?—The extreme utility of possessions in the West Indies to the augmentation of the naval power of France. A very curious topic of argument to be proposed and insisted on by an ambassador of Great Britain. It is directly and plainly this—'Come, we know that of all things you wish a naval power, and it is natural you should, who wish to destroy the very sources of the British greatness, to overpower our marine, to destroy our commerce, to eradicate our foreign influence, and to lay us open to an invasion, which, at one stroke, may complete our servitude and ruin, and expunge us from among the nations of the earth. Here I have it in my budget, the infallible arcanum for that purpose. You are but novices in the art of naval resources. Let you have

the West Indies back, and your maritime preponderance is secured, for which you would do well to be moderate in your demands upon the Austrian Netherlands.'

Under any circumstances, this is a most extraordinary topic of argument; but it is rendered by much the more unaccountable, when we are told that, if the war has been diverted from the great object of establishing society and good order in Europe by destroying the usurpation in France; this diversion was made to increase the naval resources and power of Great Britain, and to lower, if not annihilate, those of the marine of France. I leave all this to the very serious reflection of every Englishman.

This basis was no sooner admitted, than the rejection of a treaty upon that sole foundation was a thing of course. The enemy did not think it worthy of a discussion, as in truth it was not; and immediately, as usual, they began, in the most opprobrious, and most insolent manner, to question our sincerity and good faith. Whereas, in truth, there was no one symptom wanting of openness and fair dealing. What could be more fair than to lay open to an enemy all that you wished to obtain, and the price you meant to pay for it, and to desire him to imitate your ingenuous proceeding, and in the same manner to open his honest heart to you? Here was no want of fair dealing, but there was too evidently a fault of another kind; there was much weakness—there was an eager and impotent desire of associating with this unsocial power, and of attempting the connexion by any means, however manifestly feeble and ineffectual. The event was committed to chance; that is, to such a manifestation of the desire of France for peace, as would induce the Directory to forget the advantages they had in the system of barter. Accordingly the general desire for such a peace was triumphantly reported from the moment that Lord Malmesbury had set his foot on shore at Calais.

It has been said that the Directory was compelled

against its will to accept the basis of barter (as if that had tended to accelerate the work of pacification !) by the voice of all France. Had this been the case, the directors would have continued to listen to that voice to which it seems they were so obedient: they would have proceeded with the negotiation upon that basis. But the fact is that they instantly broke up the negotiation, as soon as they had obliged our ambassador to violate all the principles of treaty, and weakly, rashly, and unguardedly, to expose, without any counter-proposition, the whole of our project with regard to ourselves and our allies, and without holding out the smallest hope that they would admit the smallest part of our pretensions.

When they had thus drawn from us all that they could draw out, they expelled Lord Malmesbury, and they appealed, for the propriety of their conduct, to that very France, which, we thought proper to suppose, had driven them to this fine concession: and I do not find that in either division of the family of thieves, the younger branch, or the elder, or in any other body whatsoever, there was any indignation excited, or any tumult raised; or anything like the virulence of opposition which was shown to the king's ministers here on account of that transaction.

Notwithstanding all this, it seems a hope is still entertained that the Directory will have that tenderness for the carcase of their country, by whose very distemper, and on whose festering wounds, like vermin, they are fed; that these pious patriots will of themselves come into a more moderate and reasonable way of thinking and acting. In the name of wonder, what has inspired our ministry with this hope any more than with their former expectations ?

Do these hopes only arise from continual disappointment ? Do they grow out of the usual grounds of despair ? What is there to encourage them in the conduct, or even in the declarations of the ruling powers in France, from the first formation of their mischievous

republic to the hour in which I write? Is not the Directory composed of the same junto? Are they not the identical men, who, from the base and sordid vices which belonged to their original place and situation, aspired to the dignity of crimes; and from the dirtiest, lowest, most fraudulent, and most knavish of chicaners, ascended in the scale of robbery, sacrilege, and assassination in all its forms, till at last they had imbrued their impious hands in the blood of their sovereign? Is it from these men that we are to hope for this paternal tenderness to their country, and this sacred regard for the peace and happiness of all nations?

But it seems there is still another lurking hope, akin to that which duped us so egregiously before, when our delightful basis was accepted; we still flatter ourselves that the public voice of France will compel this Directory to more moderation. Whence does this hope arise? What public voice is there in France? There are, indeed, some writers, who, since this monster of a Directory has obtained a great, regular, military force to guard them, are indulged in a sufficient liberty of writing, and some of them write well undoubtedly. But the world knows that in France there is no public, that the country is composed but of two descriptions; audacious tyrants, and trembling slaves. The contests between the tyrants is the only vital principle that can be discerned in France. The only thing which there appears like spirit, is amongst their late associates, and fastest friends of the Directory, the more furious and untameable part of the Jacobins. This discontented member of the faction does almost balance the reigning divisions; and it threatens every moment to predominate. For the present, however, the dread of their fury forms some sort of security to their fellows, who now exercise a more regular, and therefore a somewhat less ferocious tyranny. Most of the slaves choose a quiet, however reluctant, submission to those who are somewhat satiated with blood, and who, like wolves, are a little more tame from being a little less hungry, in preference to an irruption

of the famished devourers, who are prowling and howling about the fold.

This circumstance assures some degree of permanence to the power of those whom we know to be permanently our rancorous and implacable enemies. But to those very enemies, who have sworn our destruction, we have ourselves given a further and far better security, by rendering the cause of the royalists desperate. Those brave and virtuous, but unfortunate adherents to the ancient constitution of their country, after the miserable slaughters which have been made in that body, after all their losses by emigration, are still numerous, but unable to exert themselves against the force of the usurpation, evidently countenanced and upheld by those very princes who had called them to arm for the support of the legal monarchy. Where then, after chasing these fleeting hopes of ours from point to point of the political horizon, are they at last really found? Not where, under Providence, the hopes of Englishmen used to be placed, in our own courage and in our own virtues, but in the moderation and virtue of the most atrocious monsters that have ever disgraced and plagued mankind.

The only excuse to be made for all our mendicant diplomacy is the same as in the case of all other mendicancy;—namely, that it has been founded on absolute necessity. This deserves consideration. Necessity, as it has no law, so it has no shame; but moral necessity is not like metaphysical, or even physical. In that category it is a word of loose signification, and conveys different ideas to different minds. To the low-minded, the slightest necessity becomes an invincible necessity. 'The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way, and I shall be devoured in the streets.' But when the necessity pleaded is not in the nature of things, but in the vices of him who alleges it, the whining tones of commonplace beggarly rhetoric produce nothing but indignation; because they indicate a desire of keeping up a dishonourable existence, without utility to others, and without dignity to itself; because they

aim at obtaining the dues of labour without industry: and by frauds would draw from the compassion of others, what men ought to owe to their own spirit and their own exertions.

I am thoroughly satisfied that if we degrade ourselves, it is the degradation which will subject us to the yoke of necessity, and not that it is necessity, which has brought on our degradation. In this same chaos, where light and darkness are struggling together, the open subscription of last year, with all its circumstances, must have given us no little glimmering of hope; not (as I have heard it was vainly discoursed) that the loan could prove a crutch to a lame negotiation abroad; and that the whiff and wind of it must at once have disposed the enemies of all tranquillity to a desire for peace. Judging on the face of facts, if on them it had any effect at all, it had the direct contrary effect; for very soon after the loan became public at Paris, the negotiation ended, and our ambassador was ignominiously expelled. My view of this was different: I liked the loan, not from the influence which it might have on the enemy, but on account of the temper which it indicated in our own people. This alone is a consideration of any importance; because all calculation formed upon a supposed relation of the habitudes of others to our own, under the present circumstances is weak and fallacious. The adversary must be judged, not by what we are, or by what we wish him to be, but by what we must know he actually is: unless we choose to shut our eyes and our ears to the uniform tenor of all his discourses, and to his uniform course in all his actions. We may be deluded; but we cannot pretend that we have been disappointed. The old rule of *Ne te quaesiveris extra* is a precept as available in policy as it is in morals. Let us leave off speculating upon the disposition and the wants of the enemy. Let us descend into our own bosoms; let us ask ourselves what are our duties and what are our means of discharging them. In what heart are you at home?—How far

may an English minister confide in the affections, in the confidence, in the force of an English people? What does he find us when he puts us to the proof of what English interest and English honour demand? It is as furnishing an answer to these questions that I consider the circumstances of the loan. The effect on the enemy is not in what he may speculate on our resources, but in what he shall feel from our arms.

The circumstances of the loan have proved beyond a doubt three capital points, which, if they are properly used, may be advantageous to the future liberty and happiness of mankind. In the first place, the loan demonstrates, in regard to instrumental resources, the competency of this kingdom to the assertion of the common cause and to the maintenance and superintendence of that which it is its duty and its glory to hold, and to watch over—the balance of power throughout the Christian world. Secondly, it brings to light what, under the most discouraging appearances, I always reckoned on; that with its ancient physical force, not only unimpaired but augmented, its ancient spirit is still alive in the British nation. It proves that for their application there is a spirit equal to the resources, for its energy above them. It proves that there exists, though not always visible, a spirit which never fails to come forth whenever it is ritually invoked; a spirit which will give no equivocal response, but such as will hearten the timidity, and fix the irresolution of hesitating prudence; a spirit which will be ready to perform all the tasks that shall be imposed upon it by public honour. Thirdly, the loan displays an abundant confidence in his majesty's government, as administered by his present servants, in the prosecution of a war which the people consider, not as a war made on the suggestion of ministers and to answer the purposes of the ambition or pride of statesmen, but as a war of their own, and in defence of that very property which they expend for its support; a war for that order of things, from which

everything valuable that they possess is derived, and in which order alone it can possibly be maintained.

I hear in derogation of the value of the fact, from which I draw inferences so favourable to the spirit of the people and to its just expectation from ministers, that the eighteen million loan is to be considered in no other light, than as taking advantage of a very lucrative bargain held out to the subscribers. I do not in truth believe it. All the circumstances which attended the subscription strongly spoke a different language. Be it, however, as these detractors say. This with me derogates little, or rather nothing at all, from the political value and importance of the fact. I should be very sorry if the transaction was not such a bargain; otherwise it would not have been a fair one. A corrupt and improvident loan, like everything else corrupt or prodigal, cannot be too much condemned; but there is a short-sighted parsimony still more fatal than an unforseeing expense. The value of money must be judged, like everything else, from its rate at market. To force that market, or any market, is of all things the most dangerous. For a small temporary benefit, the spring of all public credit might be relaxed for ever. The monied men have a right to look to advantage in the investment of their property. To advance their money, they risk it; and the risk is to be included in the price. If they were to incur a loss, that loss would amount to a tax on that peculiar species of property. In effect, it would be the most unjust and impolitic of all things—unequal taxation. It would throw upon one description of persons in the community, that burden which ought by fair and equitable distribution to rest upon the whole. None on account of their dignity should be exempt; none (preserving due proportion) on account of the scantiness of their means. The moment a man is exempted from the maintenance of the community, he is in a sort separated from it. He loses the place of a citizen.

So it is in all *taxation*: but in a *bargain*, when terms

of loss are looked for by the borrower from the lender, compulsion, or what virtually is compulsion, introduces itself into the place of treaty. When compulsion may be at all used by a state in borrowing, the occasion must determine. But the compulsion ought to be known, and well defined, and well distinguished: for otherwise treaty only weakens the energy of compulsion, while compulsion destroys the freedom of a bargain. The advantage of both is lost by the confusion of things in their nature utterly unsociable. It would be to introduce compulsion into that in which freedom and existence are the same; I mean credit. The moment that shame, or fear, or force, are directly or indirectly applied to a loan, credit perishes.

There must be some impulse besides public spirit, to put private interest into motion along with it. Monied men ought to be allowed to set a value on their money; if they did not, there could be no monied men. This desire of accumulation is a principle without which the means of their service to the state could not exist. The love of lucre, though sometimes carried to a ridiculous, sometimes to a vicious excess, is the grand cause of prosperity to all states. In this natural, this reasonable, this powerful, this prolific principle, it is for the satirist to expose the ridiculous; it is for the moralist to censure the vicious; it is for the sympathetic heart to reprobate the hard and cruel; it is for the judge to animadvert on the fraud, the extortion, and the oppression; but it is for the statesman to employ it as he finds it, with all its concomitant excellences, with all its imperfections on its head. It is his part, in this case, as it is in all other cases, where he is to make use of the general energies of nature, to take them as he finds them.

After all, it is a great mistake to imagine, as too commonly, almost indeed generally, it is imagined, that the public borrower and the private lender are two adverse parties with different and contending interests; and that what is given to the one, is wholly taken from the other. Constituted as our system of

finance and taxation is, the interests of the contracting parties cannot well be separated, whatever they may reciprocally intend. He who is the hard lender of to-day, to-morrow is the generous contributor to his own payment. For example, the last loan is raised on public taxes, which are designed to produce annually two millions sterling. At first view, this is an annuity of two millions dead charge upon the public in favour of certain monied men; but inspect the thing more nearly, follow the stream in its meanders, and you will find that there is a good deal of fallacy in this state of things.

I take it that whoever considers any man's expenditure of his income, old or new (I speak of certain classes in life), will find a full third of it to go in taxes, direct or indirect. If so, this new-created income of two millions will probably furnish £665,000 (I avoid broken numbers) towards the payment of its own interest, or to the sinking of its own capital. So it is with the whole of the public debt. Suppose it any given sum, it is a fallacious estimate of the affairs of a nation to consider it as a mere burden: to a degree it is so without question, but not wholly so, nor anything like it. If the income from the interest be spent, the above proportion returns again into the public stock: insomuch that, taking the interest of the whole debt to be twelve millions three hundred thousand pounds (it is something more), not less than a sum of four million one hundred thousand pounds comes back again to the public through the channel of imposition. If the whole, or any part, of that income be saved, so much new capital is generated; the infallible operation of which is to lower the value of money, and consequently to conduce towards the improvement of public credit.

I take the expenditure of the *capitalist*, not the value of the capital, as my standard; because it is the standard upon which, amongst us, property, as an object of taxation, is rated. In this country, land and offices only excepted, we raise no faculty tax. We

preserve the faculty from the expense. Our taxes, for the far greater portion, fly over the heads of the lowest classes. They escape too, who, with better ability, voluntarily subject themselves to the harsh discipline of a rigid necessity. With us, labour and frugality, the parents of riches, are spread, and wisely too. The moment men cease to augment the common stock, the moment they no longer enrich it by their industry or their self-denial, their luxury and even their ease are obliged to pay contribution to the public; not because they are vicious principles, but because they are unproductive. If, in fact, the interest paid by the public had not thus revolved again into its own fund; if this secretion had not again been absorbed into the mass of blood, it would have been impossible for the nation to have existed to this time under such a debt. But under the debt it does exist and flourish; and this flourishing state of existence in no small degree is owing to the contribution from the debt to the payment. Whatever, therefore, is taken from that capital by too close a bargain, is but a delusive advantage; it is so much lost to the public in another way. This matter cannot, on the one side or the other, be metaphysically pursued to the extreme, but it is a consideration of which, in all discussions of this kind, we ought never wholly to lose sight.

It is never, therefore, wise to quarrel with the interested views of men, whilst they are combined with the public interest and promote it: it is our business to tie the knot, if possible, closer. Resources that are derived from extraordinary virtues, as such virtues are rare, so they must be unproductive. It is a good thing for a monied man to pledge his property on the welfare of his country; he shows that he places his treasure where his heart is; and, revolving in this circle, we know that 'wherever a man's treasure is, there his heart will be also.' For these reasons, and on these principles, I have been sorry to see the attempts which have been made, with more good meaning than foresight and consideration, towards

raising the annual interest of this loan by private contributions. Wherever a regular revenue is established, there voluntary contribution can answer no purpose, but to disorder and disturb it in its course. To recur to such aids is, for so much, to dissolve the community, and to return to a state of unconnected nature. And even if such a supply should be productive in a degree commensurate to its object, it must also be productive of much vexation, and much oppression. Either the citizens by the proposed duties pay their proportion according to some rate made by public authority, or they do not. If the law be well made, and the contributions founded on just proportions, everything superadded by something that is not as regular as law, and as uniform in its operation, will become more or less out of proportion. If, on the contrary, the law be not made upon proper calculation, it is a disgrace to the public wisdom, which fails in skill to assess the citizen in just measure, and according to his means. But the hand of authority is not always the most heavy hand. It is obvious that men may be oppressed by many ways, besides those which take their course from the supreme power of the state. Suppose the payment to be wholly discretionary. Whatever has its origin in caprice, is sure not to improve in its progress, nor to end in reason. It is impossible for each private individual to have any measure conformable to the particular condition of each of his fellow-citizens, or to the general exigencies of his country. 'Tis a random shot at best.

When men proceed in this irregular mode, the first contributor is apt to grow peevish with his neighbours. He is but too well disposed to measure their means by his own envy, and not by the real state of their fortunes, which he can rarely know, and which it may in them be an act of the grossest imprudence to reveal. Hence the odium and lassitude, with which people will look upon a provision for the public, which is bought by discord at the expense of social quiet. Hence the bitter heart-burnings, and the war of

tongues which is so often the prelude to other wars. Nor is it every contribution, called voluntary, which is according to the free will of the giver. A false shame, or a false glory, against his feelings and his judgment, may tax an individual to the detriment of his family, and in wrong of his creditors. A pretence of public spirit may disable him from the performance of his private duties. It may disable him even from paying the legitimate contributions which he is to furnish according to the prescript of law; but what is the most dangerous of all is that malignant disposition to which this mode of contribution evidently tends, and which at length leaves the comparatively indigent to judge of the wealth and to prescribe to the opulent, or those whom they conceive to be such, the use they are to make of their fortunes. From thence it is but one step to the subversion of all property.

Far, very far, am I from supposing that such things enter into the purposes of those excellent persons whose zeal has led them to this kind of measure; but the measure itself will lead them beyond their intention, and what is begun with the best designs, bad men will perversely improve to the worst of their purposes. An ill-founded plausibility in great affairs is a real evil. In France we have seen the wickedest and most foolish of men, the constitution-mongers of 1789, pursuing this very course, and ending in this very event. These projectors of deception set on foot two modes of voluntary contribution to the state. The first they called patriotic gifts. These, for the greater part, were not more ridiculous in the mode, than contemptible in the project. The other, which they called the patriotic contribution, was expected to amount to a fourth of the fortunes of individuals, but at their own will and on their own estimate; but this contribution threatening to fall infinitely short of their hopes, they soon made it compulsory both in the rate and in the levy, beginning in fraud, and ending, as all the frauds of power end, in plain violence. All these

devices to produce an involuntary will, were under the pretext of relieving the more indigent classes; but the principle of voluntary contribution, however delusive, being once established, these lower classes first, and then all classes, were encouraged to throw off the regular, methodical payments to the state as so many badges of slavery. Thus all regular revenue failing, these impostors raising the superstructure on the same cheats with which they had laid the foundation of their greatness, and not content with a portion of the possessions of the rich, confiscated the whole, and, to prevent them from reclaiming their rights, murdered the proprietors. The whole of the process has passed before our eyes, and been conducted indeed with a greater degree of rapidity than could be expected.

My opinion, then, is that public contributions ought only to be raised by the public will. By the judicious form of our constitution, the public contribution is in its name and substance a grant. In its origin it is truly voluntary; not voluntary according to the irregular, unsteady, capricious will of individuals, but according to the will and wisdom of the whole popular mass, in the only way in which will and wisdom can go together. This voluntary grant obtaining in its progress the force of a law, a general necessity which takes away all merit, and consequently all jealousy from individuals, compresses, equalizes, and satisfies the whole; suffering no man to judge of his neighbour, or to arrogate anything to himself. If their will complies with their obligation, the great end is answered in the happiest mode; if the will resists the burden, every one loses a great part of his own will as a common lot. After all, perhaps contributions raised by a charge on luxury, or that degree of convenience which approaches so near as to be confounded with luxury, is the only mode of contribution which may be with truth termed voluntary.

I might rest here, and take the loan I speak of as leading to a solution of that question, which I proposed

in my first letter: 'Whether the inability of the country to prosecute the war, did necessitate a submission to the indignities and the calamities of a peace with the regicide power?' But give me leave to pursue this point a little further.

I know that it has been a cry usual on this occasion, as it has been upon occasions where such a cry could have less apparent justification, that great distress and misery have been the consequence of this war, by the burdens brought and laid upon the people. But to know where the burden really lies; and where it presses, we must divide the people. As to the common people, their stock is in their persons and in their earnings. I deny that the stock of their persons is diminished in a greater proportion than the common sources of populousness abundantly fill up; I mean constant employment; proportioned pay according to the produce of the soil, and, where the soil fails, according to the operation of the general capital; plentiful nourishment to vigorous labour; comfortable provision to decrepid age, to orphan infancy, and to accidental malady. I say nothing to the policy of the provision for the poor, in all the variety of faces under which it presents itself. This is the matter of another inquiry. I only just speak of it as of a fact, taken with others, to support me in my denial that hitherto any one of the ordinary sources of the increase of mankind is dried up by this war. I affirm, what I can well prove, that the waste has been less than the supply. To say that in war no man must be killed, is to say that there ought to be no war. This, they may say, who wish to talk idly, and who would display their humanity at the expense of their honesty or their understanding. If more lives are lost in this war than necessity requires, they are lost by misconduct or mistake; but if the hostility be just, the error is to be corrected; the war is not to be abandoned.

That the stock of the common people, in numbers, is not lessened, any more than the causes are impaired, is manifest, without being at the pains of an actual

numeration. An improved and improving agriculture, which implies a great augmentation of labour, has not yet found itself at a stand, no, not for a single moment, for want of the necessary hands, either in the settled progress of husbandry, or in the occasional pressure of harvests. I have even reason to believe that there has been a much smaller importation, or the demand of it, from a neighbouring kingdom, than in former times, when agriculture was more limited in its extent and its means, and when the time was a season of profound peace. On the contrary, the prolific fertility of country life has poured its superfluity of population into the canals, and into other public works, which of late years have been undertaken to so amazing an extent, and which have not only not been discontinued, but, beyond all expectation, pushed on with redoubled vigour, in a war that calls for so many of our men, and so much of our riches. An increasing capital calls for labour; and an increasing population answers to the call. Our manufactures, augmented both for the supply of foreign and domestic consumption, reproducing, with the means of life, the multitudes which they use and waste (and which many of them devour much more surely and much more largely than the war), have always found the laborious hand ready for the liberal pay. That the price of the soldier is highly raised is true. In part this rise may be owing to some measures not so well considered in the beginning of this war; but the grand cause has been the reluctance of that class of people from whom the soldiery is taken, to enter into a military life, not that but once entered into, it has its conveniences, and even its pleasures. I have seldom known a soldier who, at the intercession of his friends, and at their no small charge, had been redeemed from that discipline, that in a short time was not eager to return to it again. But the true reason is the abundant occupation, and the augmented stipend found in towns, and villages, and farms, which leaves a smaller number of persons to be disposed of. The price of men for new and untried ways of life must

bear a proportion to the profits of that mode of existence from whence they are to be bought.

So far as to the stock of the common people, as it consists in their persons. As to the other part, which consists in their earnings, I have to say that the rates of wages are very greatly augmented almost through the kingdom. In the parish where I live, it has been raised from seven to nine shillings in the week for the same labourer, performing the same task, and no greater. Except something in the malt taxes, and the duties upon sugars, I do not know any one tax imposed for very many years past, which affects the labourer in any degree whatsoever; while, on the other hand, the tax upon houses not having more than seven windows (that is, upon cottages) was repealed the very year before the commencement of the present war. On the whole, I am satisfied that the humblest class, and that class which touches the most nearly on the lowest, out of which it is continually emerging, and to which it is continually falling, receives far more from public impositions than it pays. That class receives two millions sterling annually from the classes above it. It pays to no such amount towards any public contribution.

I hope it is not necessary for me to take notice of that language, so ill-suited to the persons to whom it has been attributed, and so unbecoming the place in which it is said to have been uttered, concerning the present war as the cause of the high price of provisions during the greater part of the year 1796. I presume it is only to be ascribed to the intolerable licence with which the newspapers break not only the rules of decorum, in real life, but even the dramatic decorum, when they personate great men, and, like bad poets, make the heroes of the piece talk more like us Grub-street scribblers, than in a style consonant to persons of gravity and importance in the state. It was easy to demonstrate the cause, and the sole cause, of that rise in the grand article and first necessary of life. It would appear that it had no more connexion

with the war, than the moderate price to which all sorts of grain were reduced, soon after the return of Lord Malmesbury, had with the state of politics and the fate of his lordship's treaty. I have quite as good reason (that is, no reason at all) to attribute this abundance to the longer continuance of the war, as the gentlemen who personate leading members of parliament have had for giving the enhanced price to that war, at a more early period of its duration. Oh! the folly of us poor creatures, who, in the midst of our distresses, or our escapes, are ready to claw or caress one another, upon matters that so seldom depend on our wisdom or our weakness, on our good or evil conduct towards each other!

An untimely shower, or an unseasonable drought; a frost too long continued, or too suddenly broken up, with rain and tempest; the blight of the spring, or the smut of the harvest; will do more to cause the distress of the belly, than all the contrivances of all statesmen can do to relieve it. Let government protect and encourage industry, secure property, repress violence, and discountenance fraud, it is all that they have to do. In other respects, the less they meddle in these affairs the better; the rest is in the hands of our Master and theirs. We are in a constitution of things wherein—'*Modo sol nimius, modo corripit imber.*' But I will push this matter no further. As I have said a good deal upon it at various times during my public service, and have lately written[1] something on it, which may yet see the light, I shall content myself now with observing, that the vigorous and laborious class of life has lately got, from the *bon ton* of the humanity of this day, the name of the '*labouring poor.*' We have heard many plans for the relief of the '*labouring poor.*' This puling jargon is not as innocent as it is foolish. In meddling with great affairs, weakness is never innoxious. Hitherto the name of poor (in the sense in which it is used to excite compassion) has not been used

[1] See p. 3, ante.

for those who can, but for those who cannot, labour—for the sick and infirm, for orphan infancy, for languishing and decrepid age; but when we affect to pity, as poor, those who must labour, or the world cannot exist, we are trifling with the condition of mankind. It is the common doom of man that he must eat his bread by the sweat of his brow, that is, by the sweat of his body, or the sweat of his mind. If this toil was inflicted as a curse, it is, as might be expected, from the curses of the Father of all blessings; it is tempered with many alleviations, many comforts. Every attempt to fly from it, and to refuse the very terms of our existence, becomes much more truly a curse; and heavier pains and penalties fall upon those who would elude the tasks which are put upon them by the great Master Workman of the world, who, in his dealings with his creatures, sympathizes with their weakness, and speaking of a creation wrought by mere will out of nothing, speaks of six days of *labour*, and one of *rest*. I do not call a healthy young man, cheerful in his mind and vigorous in his arms, I cannot call such a man *poor*; I cannot pity my kind as a kind, merely because they are men. This affected pity only tends to dissatisfy them with their condition, and to teach them to seek resources where no resources are to be found, in something else than their own industry, and frugality, and sobriety. Whatever may be the intention (which because I do not know, I cannot dispute) of those who would discontent mankind by this strange pity, they act towards us, in the consequences, as if they were our worst enemies.

In turning our view from the lower to the higher classes, it will not be necessary for me to show at any length that the stock of the latter, as it consists in their numbers, has not yet suffered any material diminution. I have not seen or heard it asserted: I have no reason to believe it: there is no want of officers, that I have ever understood, for the new ships which we commission, or the new regiments which we raise. In the nature of things it is not with their

persons, that the higher classes principally pay their contingent to the demands of war. There is another, and not less important part, which rests with almost exclusive weight upon them. They furnish the means.

> . . . . . 'How war may best upheld
> Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
> In all her equipage.'

Not that they are exempt from contributing also by their personal service in the fleets and armies of their country. They do contribute, and in their full and fair proportion, according to the relative proportion of their numbers in the community. They contribute all the mind that actuates the whole machine. The fortitude required of them is very different from the unthinking alacrity of the common soldier, or common sailor, in the face of danger and death; it is not a passion, it is not an impulse, it is not a sentiment; it is a cool, steady, deliberate principle, always present, always equable; having no connexion with anger; tempering honour with prudence; incited, invigorated, and sustained, by a generous love of fame; informed, moderated, and directed by an enlarged knowledge of its own great public ends; flowing in one blended stream from the opposite sources of the heart and the head; carrying in itself its own commission, and proving its title to every other command, by the first and most difficult command, that of the bosom in which it resides: it is a fortitude, which unites with the courage of the field the more exalted and refined courage of the council; which knows as well to retreat, as to advance; which can conquer as well by delay, as by the rapidity of a march, or the impetuosity of an attack; which can be, with Fabius, the black cloud that lowers on the tops of the mountains, or with Scipio, the thunderbolt of war; which, undismayed by false shame, can patiently endure the severest trial that a gallant spirit can undergo, in the taunts and provocations of the enemy, the suspicions, the cold respect, and 'mouth-honour' of those, from whom

it should meet a cheerful obedience; which, undisturbed by false humanity, can calmly assume that most awful moral responsibility of deciding when victory may be too dearly purchased by the loss of a single life, and when the safety and glory of their country may demand the certain sacrifice of thousands. Different stations of command may call for different modifications of this fortitude, but the character ought to be the same in all. And never, in the most 'palmy state' of our martial renown, did it shine with brighter lustre, than in the present sanguinary and ferocious hostilities, wherever the British arms have been carried. But in this most arduous and momentous conflict, which from its nature should have roused us to new and unexampled efforts, I know not how it has been, that we have never put forth half the strength, which we have exerted in ordinary wars. In the fatal battles which have drenched the Continent with blood, and shaken the system of Europe to pieces, we have never had any considerable army of a magnitude to be compared to the least of those by which, in former times, we so gloriously asserted our place as protectors, not oppressors, at the head of the great commonwealth of Europe. We have never manfully met the danger in front: and when the enemy, resigning to us our natural dominion of the ocean, and abandoning the defence of his distant possessions to the infernal energy of the destroying principles, which he had planted there for the subversion of the neighbouring colonies, drove forth, by one sweeping law of unprecedented despotism, his armed multitudes on every side, to overwhelm the countries and states, which had for centuries stood the firm barriers against the ambition of France; we drew back the arm of our military force, which had never been more than half raised to oppose him. From that time we have been combating only with the other arm of our naval power; the right arm of England I admit; but which struck almost unresisted, with blows that could never reach the heart of the hostile mischief. From that time, without a single effort to

regain those outworks, which ever till now we so strenuously maintained, as the strong frontier of our own dignity and safety, no less than the liberties of Europe; with but one feeble attempt to succour those brave, faithful, and numerous allies, whom, for the first time since the days of our Edwards and Henries, we now have in the bosom of France itself; we have been intrenching, and fortifying, and garrisoning ourselves at home: we have been redoubling security on security, to protect ourselves from invasion, which has now first become to us a serious object of alarm and terror. Alas! the few of us who have protracted life in any measure near to the extreme limits of our short period have been condemned to see strange things; new systems of policy, new principles, and not only new men, but what might appear a new species of men. I believe that any person who was of age to take a part in public affairs forty years ago (if the intermediate space of time were expunged from his memory) would hardly credit his senses, when he should hear from the highest authority that an army of two hundred thousand men was kept up in this island, and that in the neighbouring island there were at least fourscore thousand more. But when he had recovered from his surprise on being told of this army, which has not its parallel, what must be his astonishment to be told again, that this mighty force was kept up for the mere purpose of an inert and passive defence, and that in its far greater part, it was disabled by its constitution and very essence from defending us against an enemy by any one preventive stroke, or any one operation of active hostility? What must his reflections be on learning further that a fleet of five hundred men of war, the best appointed, and to the full as ably commanded as this country ever had upon the sea, was for the greater part employed in carrying on the same system of unenterprising defence? what must be the sentiments and feelings of one who remembers the former energy of England, when he is given to understand that these two islands, with their extensive and everywhere

vulnerable coast, should be considered as a garrisoned sea-town; what would such a man, what would any man think, if the garrison of so strange a fortress should be such, and so feebly commanded, as never to make a sally; and that, contrary to all which has hitherto been seen in war, an infinitely inferior army, with the shattered relics of an almost annihilated navy, ill-found and ill-manned, may with safety besiege this superior garrison, and, without hazarding the life of a man, ruin the place, merely by the menaces and false appearances of an attack? Indeed, indeed, my dear friend, I look upon this matter of our defensive system as much the most important of all considerations at this moment. It has oppressed me with many anxious thoughts, which, more than any bodily distemper, have sunk me to the condition, in which you know that I am. Should it please Providence to restore to me even the late weak remains of my strength, I propose to make this matter the subject of a particular discussion. I only mean here to argue that the mode of conducting the war on our part, be it good or bad, has prevented even the common havoc of war in our population, and especially among that class, whose duty and privilege of superiority it is, to lead the way amidst the perils and slaughter of the field of battle.

The other causes, which sometimes affect the numbers of the lower classes, but which I have shown not to have existed to any such degree during this war,—penury, cold, hunger, nakedness,—do not easily reach the higher orders of society. I do not dread for them the slightest taste of these calamities from the distress and pressure of the war. They have much more to dread in that way from the confiscations, the rapines, the burnings, and the massacres that may follow in the train of a peace, which shall establish the devastating and depopulating principles and example of the French regicides in security, and triumph, and dominion. In the ordinary course of human affairs any check to population among men in ease and opulence is less to be apprehended from what they may suffer, than from

what they enjoy. Peace is more likely to be injurious to them in that respect than war. The excesses of delicacy, repose, and satiety, are as unfavourable as the extremes of hardship, toil, and want, to the increase and multiplication of our kind. Indeed the abuse of the bounties of nature, much more surely than any partial privation of them, tends to intercept that precious boon of a second and dearer life in our progeny, which was bestowed in the first great command to man from the All-gracious Giver of all, whose name be blessed, whether he gives or takes away. His hand, in every page of his book, has written the lesson of moderation. Our physical well-being, our moral worth, our social happiness, our political tranquillity, all depend on that control of all our appetites and passions, which the ancients designed by the cardinal virtue of *temperance*.

The only real question to our present purpose, with regard to the higher classes, is, how stands the account of their stock, as it consists in wealth of every description? Have the burdens of the war compelled them to curtail any part of their former expenditure; which, I have before observed, affords the only standard of estimating property as an object of taxation? Do they enjoy all the same conveniences, the same comforts, the same elegancies, the luxuries, in the same, or in as many different modes, as they did before the war?

In the last eleven years, there have been no less than three solemn inquiries into the finances of the kingdom, by three different committees of your House. The first was in the year 1786. On that occasion, I remember, the report of the committee was examined, and sifted and bolted to the bran, by a gentleman whose keen and powerful talents I have ever admired. He thought there was not sufficient evidence to warrant the pleasing representation, which the committee had made, of our national prosperity. He did not believe that our public revenue could continue to be so productive as they had assumed. He even went the length

of recording his own inferences of doubt, in a set of resolutions, which now stand upon your journals. And perhaps the retrospect, on which the report proceeded, did not go far enough back, to allow any sure and satisfactory average for a ground of solid calculation. But what was the event? When the next committee sat in 1791, they found that, on an average of the last four years, their predecessors had fallen short in their estimate of the permanent taxes, by more than three hundred and forty thousand pounds a year. Surely, then, if I can show that, in the produce of those same taxes, and more particularly of such as affect articles of luxurious use and consumption, the four years of the war have equalled those four years of peace, flourishing, as they were, beyond the most sanguine speculations, I may expect to hear no more of the distress occasioned by the war.

The additional burdens which have been laid on some of those same articles might reasonably claim some allowance to be made. Every new advance of the price to the consumer is a new incentive to him to retrench the quantity of his consumption; and if, upon the whole, he pays the same, his property, computed by the standard of what he voluntarily pays, must remain the same. But I am willing to forego that fair advantage in the inquiry. I am willing that the receipts of the permanent taxes which existed before January 1793 should be compared during the war, and during the period of peace which I have mentioned. I will go further. Complete accounts of the year 1791 were separately laid before your House. I am ready to stand by a comparison of the produce of four years up to the beginning of the year 1792, with that of the war. Of the year immediately previous to hostilities, I have not been able to obtain any perfect documents; but I have seen enough to satisfy me that, although a comparison including that year might be less favourable, yet it would not essentially injure my argument.

You will always bear in mind, my dear sir, that I am

not considering whether, if the common enemy of the quiet of Europe had not forced us to take up arms in our own defence, the spring-tide of our prosperity might not have flowed higher than the mark at which it now stands. That consideration is connected with the question of the justice and the necessity of the war. It is a question which I have long since discussed. I am now endeavouring to ascertain whether there exists, in fact, any such necessity as we hear every day asserted, to furnish a miserable pretext for counselling us to surrender at discretion, our conquests, our honour, our dignity, our very independence, and with it, all that is dear to man. It will be more than sufficient for that purpose, if I can make it appear that we have been stationary during the war. What then will be said, if, in reality, it shall be proved that there is every indication of increased and increasing wealth, not only poured into the grand reservoir of the national capital, but diffused through all the channels of all the higher classes, and giving life and activity, as it passes, to the agriculture, the manufactures, the commerce, and the navigation of the country ?

The finance committee, which has been appointed in this session, has already made two reports. Every conclusion that I had before drawn, as you know, from my own observation, I have the satisfaction of seeing there confirmed by that great public authority. Large as was the sum, by which the committee of 1791 found the estimate of 1786 to have been exceeded in the actual produce of four years of peace, their own estimate has been exceeded, during the war, by a sum more than one-third larger. The same taxes have yielded more than half a million beyond their calculation. They yielded this, notwithstanding the stoppage of the distilleries, against which, you may remember, I privately remonstrated. With an allowance for that defalcation they have yielded sixty thousand pounds annually above the actual average of the preceding four years of peace. I believe this to have been without parallel in all former wars. If regard be had to

the great and unavoidable burdens of the present war, I am confident of the fact.

But let us descend to particulars. The taxes which go by the general name of assessed taxes, comprehend the whole or nearly the whole domestic establishment of the rich. They include some things, which belong to the middling, and even to all but the very lowest classes. They now consist of the duties on houses and windows, on male servants, horses, and carriages. They did also extend to cottages, to female servants, waggons, and carts used in husbandry, previous to the year 1792; when, with more enlightened policy, at the moment that the possibility of war could not be out of the contemplation of any statesman, the wisdom of parliament confined them to their present objects. I shall give the gross assessment for five years, as I find it in the appendix to the second report of your committee.

1791 ending 5th April	1792	£1,706,334
1792	1793	1,585,991
1793	1794	1,597,623
1794	1795	1,608,196
1795	1796	1,625,874

Here will be seen a gradual increase during the whole progress of the war; and, if I am correctly informed, the rise in the last year, after every deduction that can be made, affords the most consoling and encouraging prospect. It is enormously out of all proportion.

There are some other taxes, which seem to have a reference to the same general head. The present minister, many years ago, subjected bricks and tiles to a duty under the excise. It is of little consequence to our present consideration, whether these materials have been employed in building more commodious, more elegant, and more magnificent habitations, or in enlarging, decorating, and remodelling those, which sufficed for our plainer ancestors. During the first two years of the war, they paid so largely to the public revenue, that in 1794 a new duty was laid upon them,

which was equal to one-half of the old, and which has produced upwards of £165,000 in the last three years. Yet, notwithstanding the pressure of this additional weight[1] there has been an actual augmentation in the consumption. The only two other articles which come under this description are, the stamp-duty on gold and silver plate, and the customs on glass plates. This latter is now, I believe, the single instance of costly furniture to be found in the catalogue of our imports. If it were wholly to vanish, I should not think we were

[1] This and the following tables on the same construction are compiled from the reports of the finance committee in 1791 and 1797, with the addition of the separate paper laid before the House of Commons, and ordered to be printed on the 7th of February, 1792.

BRICKS AND TILES.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	94,521	1793 ..	122,975	
1788 ..	96,278	1794 ..	106,811	
1789 ..	91,773	1795 ..	83,804	
1790 ..	104,409	1796 ..	94,668	
	£386,981		£408,258	Increase to 1790 £21,277.
1791 ..	£115,382	4 Yrs. to 1791	£407,842	Increase to 1791 £416.

PLATE.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	22,707	1793 ..	25,920	
1788 ..	23,295	1794 ..	23,637	
1789 ..	22,453	1795 ..	25,607	
1790 ..	18,483	1796 ..	28,513	
	£86,888		£103,677	Increase to 1790 £16,789.
1791 ..	£31,523	4 Yrs. to 1791	£95,754	Increase to 1791 £7,923.

ruined. Both the duties have risen, during the war, very considerably in proportion to the total of their produce.

We have no tax among us on the most necessary articles of food. The receipts of our custom-house, under the heads of groceries, afford us, however, some means of calculating our luxuries of the table. The articles of tea, coffee, and cocoa-nuts, I would propose to omit, and to take them instead from the excise, as best showing what is consumed at home. Upon this principle, adding them all together (with the exception of sugar, for a reason which I shall afterwards mention) I find that they have produced, in one mode of comparison, upwards of £272,000, and in the other mode, upwards of £165,000 more during the war than in peace.[1] An additional duty was also laid in 1795 on

GLASS PLATES.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	——	1793 ..	5,655	
1788 ..	5,496	1794 ..	5,456	
1789 ..	4,686	1795 ..	5,839	
1790 ..	6,008	1796 ..	8,871	
	£16,190		£25,821	Increase to 1791 £1,721.
1791 ..	£7,880	4 Years to 1791	£24,070	

[1] GROCERIES.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	167,389	1793 ..	124,655	
1788 ..	133,191	1794 ..	195,840	
1789 ..	142,871	1795 ..	208,242	
1790 ..	156,311	1796 ..	159,826	
	£599,762		£688,563	Increase to 1790 £88,801.
1791 ..	£236,727	4 Yrs. to 1791	£669,100	Increase to 1791 £19,463.

tea, another on coffee, and a third on raisins; an article, together with currants, of much more extensive use than would readily be imagined. The balance in favour of our argument would have been much enhanced, if our coffee and fruit ships from the Mediterranean had arrived, last year, at their usual season. They do not appear in these accounts. This was one consequence arising (would to God, that none more afflicting to Italy, to Europe, and the whole civilized world had arisen!) from our impolitic and precipitate desertion of that important maritime station. As to

TEA.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	424,144	1793 ..	477,644	
1788 ..	426,660	1794 ..	467,132	
1789 ..	539,575	1795 ..	507,518	
1790 ..	417,636	1796 ..	526,307	
	£1,808,115		£1,978,601	Increase to 1790 £170,486.
1791 ..	£448,709	4 Years to 1791	£1,832,680	Increase to 1791 £145,921.

The additional duty imposed in 1795 produced in that year £137,656, and in 1796, £200,107.

COFFEE AND COCOA-NUTS.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	17,006	1793 ..	36,846	
1788 ..	30,217	1794 ..	49,177	
1789 ..	34,784	1795 ..	27,913	
1790 ..	38,647	1796 ..	19,711	
	£120,654		£133,647	Increase to 1790 £12,993.
1791 ..	£41,194	4 Years to 1791	£144,842	Decrease to 1791 £11,195.

The additional duty of 1795 in that year gave £16,775, and in 1796, £15,319.

sugar[1] I have excluded it from the groceries, because the account of the customs is not a perfect criterion of the consumption, much having been re-exported to the north of Europe, which used to be supplied by France; and in the official papers which I have followed, there are no materials to furnish grounds for computing this re-exportation. The increase on the face of our entries is immense during the four years of war, little short of thirteen hundred thousand pounds.

The increase of the duties on beer has been regularly progressive, or nearly so, to a very large amount[2]. It

[1] SUGAR.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	1,065,109	1793 ..	1,473,139	
1788 ..	1,184,458	1794 ..	1,392,965	
1789 ..	1,095,106	1795 ..	1,338,246	
1790 ..	1,069,108	1796 ..	1,474,899	
	£4,413,781		£5,679,249	Increase to 1790 £1,265,468.

Increase to 1791

1791 . £1,044,053 4 Yrs. to 1791, £4,392,725 £1,286,524.

There was a new duty on *Sugar* in 1791, which produced in 1794, £234,392; in 1795, £206,932; and in 1796, £245,024. It is not clear from the report of the committee, whether the additional duty is included in the account given above.

[2] BEER, &c.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	1,761,429	1793 ..	2,043,902	
1788 ..	1,705,199	1794 ..	2,082,053	
1789 ..	1,742,514	1795 ..	1,931,101	
1790 ..	1,858,043	1796 ..	2,294,377	
	£7,067,185		£8,351,433	Increase to 1790 £1,284,248.

Increase to 1791

1791 £1,880,478 4 Yrs. to 1791 £7,186,234 £1,165,199.

is a good deal above a million, and is more than equal to one-eighth of the whole produce. Under this general

WINE.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	219,934	1793 ..	222,887	
1788 ..	215,578	1794 ..	283,644	
1789 ..	252,649	1795 ..	317,072	
1790 ..	308,624	1796 ..	187,818	
	£996,785		£1,011,421	Increase to 1790 £14,638.
1791 ..	£336,549	4 Yrs. to 1791	£1,113,400	Decrease to 1791 £101,979.

QUANTITY IMPORTED.

Years of Peace.	Tuns.	Years of War.	Tuns.
1787	29,978	1793	22,788
1788	25,442	1794	27,868
1789	27,414	1795	32,033
1790	29,182	1796	19,079

The additional duty of 1795 produced that year £730,871, and in 1796, £394,686. A second additional duty which produced £98,165 was laid 1796.

SWEETS.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	11,167	1793 ..	11,016	
1788 ..	7,375	1794 ..	10,612	
1789 ..	7,202	1795 ..	13,321	
1790 ..	4,953	1796 ..	15,050	
	£30,697		£49,999	Increase to 1790 £19,302.
1791 ..	£13,282	4 Years to 1791	£32,812	Increase to 1791 £17,178.

In 1795 an additional duty was laid on this article, which produced that year £5,679, and in 1796, £9,443, and in 1796 a second to commence on the 20th of June; its produce in that year was £2,325.

head, some other liquors are included,—cider, perry, and mead, as well as vinegar, and verjuice; but these are of very trifling consideration. The excise duties on wine, having sunk a little during the first two years of the war, were rapidly recovering their level again. In 1795, a heavy additional duty was imposed upon them, and a second in the following year; yet, being compared with four years of peace to 1790, they actually exhibit a small gain to the revenue. And low as the importation may seem in 1796, when contrasted with any year since the French treaty in 1787, it is still more than 3,000 tuns above the average importation for three years previous to that period. I have added sweets, from which our factitious wines are made; and I would have added spirits, but that the total alteration of the duties in 1789, and the recent interruption of our distilleries, rendered any comparison impracticable.

The ancient staple of our island, in which we are clothed, is very imperfectly to be traced on the books of the Custom-house: but I know that our woollen manufactures flourish. I recollect to have seen that fact very fully established, last year, from the registers kept in the West Riding of Yorkshire. This year, in the west of England, I received a similar account, on the authority of a respectable clothier, in that quarter, whose testimony can less be questioned, because, in his political opinions, he is adverse, as I understand, to the continuance of the war. The principle articles of female dress, for some time past, have been muslins and calicoes[1]. These elegant fabrics of our own looms

[1] MUSLINS AND CALICOES.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1788 ..	129,297	1793..	173,050	
1789 ..	138,660	1794..	104,902	
1790 ..	126,267	1795..	103,856	
1791 ..	128,364	1796..	272,544	
	£522,588		£654,352	Increase to 1791 £131,764.

This table begins with 1788. The net produce of the

in the East, which serve for the remittance of our own revenues, have lately been imitated at home, with improving success, by the ingenious and enterprising manufacturers of Manchester, Paisley, and Glasgow. At the same time the importation from Bengal has kept pace with the extension of our own dexterity and industry; while the sale of our printed goods[1], of both kinds, has been with equal steadiness advanced, by the taste and execution of our designers and artists. Our woollens and cottons, it is true, are not all for the home market. They do not distinctly prove what is my present point, our own wealth by our own expense. I admit it: we export them in great and growing quantities: and they who croak themselves hoarse about the decay of our trade, may put as much of this account as they choose to the creditor side of money received from other countries in payment for British skill and labour. They may settle the items to their own liking, where all goes to demonstrate our riches. I shall be contented here, with whatever they will have the goodness to leave me, and pass to another entry,

preceding year is not in the report whence the table is taken.

[1] PRINTED GOODS.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	142,000	1793 ..	191,566	
1788 ..	154,486	1794 ..	190,554	
1789 ..	153,202	1795 ..	197,416	
1790 ..	167,156	1796 ..	230,530	
	£616,844		£810,066	Increase to 1790 £193,222.
1791 ..	£191,489	4 Years to 1791	£666,333	Increase to 1791 £143,733.

These duties for 1787 are blended with several others. The proportion of printed goods to other articles for four years was found to be one-fourth. The proportion is here taken.

which is less ambiguous; I mean that of silk[1]. The manufactory itself is a forced plant. We have been obliged to guard it from foreign competition by very strict prohibitory laws. What we import is the raw and prepared material, which is worked up in various ways, and worn in various shapes by both sexes. After what we have just seen, you will probably be surprised to learn that the quantity of silk imported during the war has been much greater than it was previously in peace; and yet we must all remember to our mortification, that several of our silk ships fell a prey to citizen Admiral Richery. You will hardly expect me to go through the tape and thread, and all the other small wares of haberdashery and millinery to be gleaned up among our imports. But I shall make one observation, and with great satisfaction, respecting them. They gradually diminish, as our manufactures of the same description spread into their places; while the account of ornamental articles which our country does not produce, continues, upon the whole, to rise, in spite of all the caprices of fancy and fashion. Of this kind are the different furs[2] used for muffs, trimmings and linings, which, as the chief of the kind, I shall particularize. You will find them below.

The diversions of the higher classes form another, and the only remaining head of inquiry into their

[1] SILK.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	159,912	1793 ..	209,915	
1788 ..	123,998	1794 ..	221,306	
1789 ..	157,730	1795 ..	210,725	
1790 ..	212,522	1796 ..	221,007	
	£654,162		£862,955	Increase to 1790 £268,793.
1791 ..	£379,123	4 Years to 1791	£773,378	Increase to 1791 £89,577.

[2] See opposite page.

expenses. I mean those diversions which distinguish the country and the town life; which are visible and tangible to the statesman; which have some public measure and standard. And here, when I look to the report of your committee, I, for the first time, perceive a failure. It is clearly so. Whichever way I reckon the four years of peace, the old tax on the sports of the field has certainly proved deficient since the war. The same money, however, or nearly the same, has been paid to government: though the same number of individuals have not contributed to the payment. An additional tax was laid in 1791, and during the war, has produced upwards of £61,000; which is about £4,000 more than the decrease of the old tax, in one scheme of comparison; and about £4,000 less, in the other scheme. I might remark that the amount of the new tax, in the several years of the war, by no means bears the proportion which it ought to the old. There seems to be some great irregularity, or other, in the receipt: but I do not think it worth while to examine into the argument. I am willing to suppose, that many who, in the idleness of peace, made war upon partridges, hares, and pheasants, may now carry more noble arms against the enemies of their country.

[2] FURS.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	3,463	1793 ..	2,829	
1788 ..	2,957	1794 ..	3,353	
1789 ..	1,151	1795 ..	3,266	
1790 ..	3,328	1796 ..	6,138	
	£10,899		£15,586	Increase to 1790 £4,687.
1791 ..	£5,731	4 Years to 1791	£13,167	Increase to 1791 £2,419.

The skins here selected from the Custom-house accounts are, *Black Bear*, *Ordinary Fox*, *Marten*, *Mink*, *Musquash*, *Otter*, *Racoon*, and *Wolf*.

Our political adversaries may do what they please, with that concession. They are welcome to make the most of it. I am sure of a very handsome set-off in the other branch of expense; the amusements of a town life.

There is much gaiety, and dissipation, and profusion, which must escape, and disappoint, all the arithmetic of political economy. But the theatres are a prominent feature. They are established through every part of the kingdom, at a cost unknown till our days. There is hardly a provincial capital, which does not possess, or which does not aspire to possess, a theatre-royal. Most of them engage for a short time, at a vast price, every actor or actress of name in the metropolis; a distinction which, in the reign of my old friend Garrick, was confined to very few. The dresses, the scenes, the decorations of every kind, I am told, are in a new style of splendour and magnificence; whether, to the advantage of our dramatic taste, upon the whole, I very much doubt. It is a show and a spectacle, not a play, that is exhibited. This is undoubtedly in the genuine manner of the Augustan age, but in a manner which was censured by one of the best poets and critics of that or any age:

. . . . migravit ab aure voluptas
Omnis ad incertos oculos, et gaudia vana:
Quatuor aut plures aulaea premuntur in horas,
Dum fugiunt equitum turmae, peditumque catervae;—

I must interrupt the passage, most fervently to deprecate and abominate the sequel,

Mox trahitur manibus regum fortuna retortis.

I hope that no French fraternization, which the relations of peace and amity with systematized regicide, would assuredly, sooner or later, draw after them, even if it should overturn our happy constitution itself, could so change the hearts of Englishmen, as to make them delight in representations and processions, which have no other merit than that of degrading and insulting the name of royalty. But good taste, manners,

morals, religion, all fly, wherever the principles of Jacobinism enter; and we have no safety against them but in arms.

'The proprietors, whether in this they follow or lead what is called the town, to furnish out these gaudy and pompous entertainments, must collect so much more from the public. It was but just before the breaking out of hostilities, that they levied for themselves the very tax, which, at the close of the American war, they represented to Lord North, as certain ruin to their affairs to demand for the state. The example has since been imitated by the managers of our Italian Opera. Once during the war, if not twice (I would not willingly misstate anything, but I am not very accurate on these subjects), they have raised the price of their subscription. Yet I have never heard that any lasting dissatisfaction had been manifested, or that their houses have been unusually and constantly thin. On the contrary, all the three theatres have been repeatedly altered, and refitted, and enlarged, to make them capacious of the crowds that nightly flock to them; and one of those huge and lofty piles, which lifts its broad shoulders in gigantic pride, almost emulous of the temples of God, has been reared from the foundation at a charge of more than fourscore thousand pounds, and yet remains a naked, rough, unsightly heap.

I am afraid, my dear sir, that I have tired you with these dull though important details. But we are upon a subject which, like some of a higher nature, refuses ornament, and is contented with conveying instruction. I know, too, the obstinacy of unbelief, in those perverted minds, which have no delight but in contemplating the supposed distress, and predicting the immediate ruin, of their country. These birds of evil presage, at all times, have grated our ears with their melancholy song; and, by some strange fatality or other, it has generally happened that they have poured forth their loudest and deepest lamentations, at the periods of our most abundant prosperity. Very

early in my public life, I had occasion to make myself a little acquainted with their natural history. My first political tract in the collection which a friend has made of my publications, is an answer to a very gloomy picture of the state of the nation, which was thought to have been drawn by a statesman of some eminence in his time[1]. That was no more than the common spleen of disappointed ambition: in the present day I fear that too many are actuated by a more malignant and dangerous spirit. They hope, by depressing our minds with a despair of our means and resources, to drive us, trembling and unresisting, into the toils of our enemies, with whom, from the beginning of the revolution in France, they have ever moved in strict concert and co-operation. If, with the report of your finance committee in their hands, they can still affect to despond, and can still succeed, as they do, in spreading the contagion of their pretended fears among well-disposed, though weak men; there is no way of counteracting them, but by fixing them down to particulars. Nor must we forget that they are unwearied agitators, bold assertors, dexterous sophisters. Proof must be accumulated upon proof, to silence them. With this view I shall now direct your attention to some other striking and unerring indications of our flourishing condition; and they will, in general, be derived from other sources, but equally authentic; from other reports and proceedings of both Houses of Parliament, all of which unite with wonderful force of consent in the same general result. Hitherto we have seen the superfluity of our capital discovering itself only in procuring superfluous accommodation and enjoyment, in our houses, in our furniture, in our establishments, in our eating and drinking, our clothing, and our public diversions: we shall now see it more beneficially employed in improving our territory itself: we shall see part of our present opulence, with provident care, put out to usury for posterity.

To what ultimate extent it may be wise, or practic-

[1] See Vol. I of this Edition of Burke's Works.

able, to push inclosures of common and waste lands, may be a question of doubt, in some points of view: but no person thinks them already carried to excess; and the relative magnitude of the sums laid out upon them gives us a standard of estimating the comparative situation of the landed interest. Your House, this session, appointed a committee on waste lands, and they have made a report by their chairman, an honourable baronet, for whom the minister the other day (with very good intentions, I believe, but with little real profit to the public), thought fit to erect a board of agriculture. The account, as it stands there, appears sufficiently favourable. The greatest number of inclosing bills, passed in any one year of the last peace, does not equal the smallest annual number in the war; and those of the last year exceed, by more than one-half, the highest year of peace. But what was my surprise, on looking into the late report of the secret committee of the lords, to find a list of these bills during the war, differing in every year, and [1] larger on the whole, by nearly one-third! I have checked this account by the statute-book, and find it to be correct. What new brilliancy then does it throw over the prospect, bright as it was before! The number during the last four years has more than doubled that of the four years immediately preceding; it has surpassed the five years of peace, beyond which the lords' committees have not gone; it has even surpassed (I have verified the fact) the whole ten years of peace. I cannot stop

[1] Report of the Lords' Committee of Secrecy, ordered to be printed, 28th April, 1797, Appendix 44.

INCLOSURE BILLS.

Years of Peace.		Years of War.	
1789	33	1793	60
1790	25	1794	73
1791	40	1795	77
1792	40	1796	72
	138		282

here. I cannot advance a single step in this inquiry, without being obliged to cast my eyes back to the period when I first knew the country. These bills, which had begun in the reign of Queen Anne, had passed every year in greater or less numbers from the year 1723; yet in all that space of time, they had not reached the amount of any two years during the present war; and though seen after that time they rapidly increased, still, at the accession of his present majesty, they were far short of the number passed in the four years of hostilities.

In my first letter I mentioned the state of our inland navigation, neglected as it had been from the reign of King William to the time of my observation. It was not till the present reign that the Duke of Bridgewater's canal first excited a spirit of speculation and adventure in this way. This spirit showed itself, but necessarily made no great progress, in the American war. When peace was restored, it began of course to work with more sensible effect; yet, in ten years from that event, the bills passed on that subject were not so many as from the year 1793 to the present session of parliament. From what I can trace on the statute-book, I am confident that all the capital expended in these projects during the peace, bore no degree of proportion (I doubt on very grave consideration whether all that was ever so expended was equal) to the money which has been raised for the same purposes since the war[1]. I know that in the last four years of

[1] NAVIGATION AND CANAL BILLS.

Years of Peace.		Years of War.	
1789	3	1793	28
1790	8	1794	18
1791	10	1795	11
1792	9	1796	12
	30		69
Money raised	£2,377,200		£7,415,100

peace, when they rose regularly and rapidly, the sums specified in the acts were not near one-third of the subsequent amount. In the last session of parliament, the Grand Junction Company, as it is called, having sunk half a million (of which I feel the good effects at my own door), applied to your House for permission to subscribe half as much more among themselves. This Grand Junction is an inosculation of the grand trunk: and in the present session, the latter company has obtained the authority of parliament to float two hundred acres of land, for the purpose of forming a reservoir, thirty feet deep, two hundred yards wide at the head, and two miles in length; a lake, which may almost vie with that which once fed the now obliterated canal of Languedoc.

The present war is, above all others (of which we have heard or read), a war against landed property. That description of property is in its nature the firm base of every stable government; and has been so considered, by all the wisest writers of the old philosophy, from the time of the Stagyrite, who observes that the agricultural class of all others is the least inclined to sedition. We find it to have been so regarded, in the practical politics of antiquity, where they are brought more directly home to our understandings and bosoms in the history of Rome, and above all, in the writings of Cicero. The country tribes were always thought more respectable than those of the city. And if in our own history, there is any one circumstance to which, under God, are to be attributed the steady resistance, the fortunate issue, and sober settlement, of all our struggles for liberty, it is that, while the landed interest, instead of forming a separate body, as in other countries, has at all times been in close connexion and union with the other great interests of the country, it has been spontaneously allowed to lead, and direct, and moderate all the rest. I cannot, therefore, but see with singular gratification, that, during a war which has been eminently made for the destruction of the landed proprietors, as well as of

priests and kings, as much has been done, by public works, for the permanent benefit of their stake in this country, as in all the rest of the current century, which now touches to its close. Perhaps, after this, it may not be necessary to refer to private observation; but I am satisfied that, in general, the rents of lands have been considerably increased: they are increased very considerably indeed, if I may draw any conclusion from my own little property of that kind. I am not ignorant, however, where our public burdens are most galling. But all of this class will consider who they are that are principally menaced; how little the men of their description in other countries, where this revolutionary fury has but touched, have been found equal to their own protection; how tardy, and unprovided, and full of anguish is their flight, chained down as they are by every tie to the soil; how helpless they are, above all other men, in exile, in poverty, in need, in all the varieties of wretchedness; and then let them well weigh what are the burdens to which they ought not to submit for their own salvation.

Many of the authorities, which I have already adduced, or to which I have referred, may convey a competent notion of some of our principal manufactures. Their general state will be clear from that of our external and internal commerce, through which they circulate, and of which they are at once the cause and effect. But the communication of the several parts of the kingdom with each other, and with foreign countries, has always been regarded as one of the most certain tests to evince the prosperous or adverse state of our trade in all its branches. Recourse has usually been had to the revenue of the post office with this view. I shall include the product of the tax which was laid in the last war, and which will make the evidence more conclusive, if it shall afford the same inference;—I allude to the post-horse duty, which shows the personal intercourse within the kingdom, as the post office shows the intercourse by letters, both within and without. The first of these standards,

then, exhibits an increase, according to my former schemes of comparison, from an eleventh to a twentieth part of the whole duty[1]. The post office gives still less consolation to those who are miserable in proportion as the country feels no misery. From the commencement of the war to the month of April, 1796, the gross produce had increased by nearly one-sixth of the whole sum, which the state now derives from that fund. I find that the year ending 5th of April, 1793, gave £627,592, and the year ending at the same quarter, 1796, £750,637, after a fair deduction having been made for the alteration (which, you know, on grounds of policy I never approved) in your privilege of franking. I have seen no formal document subsequent to that period, but I have been credibly informed there is very good ground to believe that the revenue of the post office[2] still continues to be regularly and largely upon the rise.

[1] POST-HORSE DUTY.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	169,410	1793 ..	191,488	
1788 ..	204,659	1794 ..	202,884	
1789 ..	170,554	1795 ..	196,691	
1790 ..	181,155	1796 ..	204,061	
	£725,778		£795,124	Increase to 1790 £69,346.
1791	£198,634	4 Years to 1791	£755,002	Increase to 1791 £40,122.

[2] The above account is taken from a paper which was ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, December 8, 1796. From the gross produce of the year ending April 5, 1796, there has been deducted in that statement the sum of 36,666*l.*, in consequence of the regulation on franking, which took place on May 5, 1795, and was computed at 40,000*l.* per annum. To show an equal number of years, both of peace and war, the accounts of two preceding years are given in the following table, from a report made

What is the true inference to be drawn from the annual number of bankruptcies, has been the occasion of much dispute. On one side, it has been confidently urged as a sure symptom of a decaying trade: on the other side, it has been insisted that it is a circumstance attendant upon a thriving trade; for that the greater is the whole quantity of trade, the greater of course must be the positive number of failures, while the aggregate success is still in the same proportion. In truth, the increase of the number may arise from either of those causes. But all must agree in one conclusion, that, if the number diminishes, and at the same time, every other sort of evidence tends to show an augmentation of trade, there can be no better indication. We have already had very ample means of gathering, that the year 1796 was a very favourable year of trade, and in that year the number of bank-

since Mr. Burke's death by a committee of the House of Commons appointed to consider the claims of Mr. Palmer, the late Comptroller General; and for still greater satisfaction, the number of letters, inwards and outwards, has been added, except for the year 1790–1. The letter-book for that year is not to be found.

POST OFFICE.		Number of Letters.	
	Gross Revenue.	Inwards.	Outwards.
	£		
April, 1790–1 . .	575,079	—	—
1791–2 . .	585,432	6,391,149	5,081,344
1792–3 . .	627,592	6,584,867	5,041,137
1793–4 . .	691,268	7,094,777	6,537,234
1794–5 . .	705,319	7,071,029	7,473,626
1795–6 . .	750,637	7,641,077	8,597,167

From the last-mentioned report it appears that the accounts have not been completely and authentically made up, for the years ending April 5, 1796 and 1797, but on the Receiver-General's book there is an increase of the latter year over the former, equal to something more than 5 per cent.

ruptcies was at least one-fifth below the usual average. I take this from the declaration of the Lord Chancellor in the House of Lords[1]. He professed to speak from the records of chancery; and he added another very striking fact, that on the property actually paid into his court (a very small part, indeed, of the whole property of the kingdom), there had accrued in that year a net surplus of eight hundred thousand pounds, which was so much new capital.

But the real situation of our trade, during the whole of this war, deserves more minute investigation. I shall begin with that which, though the least in consequence, makes perhaps the most impression on our senses, because it meets our eyes in our daily walks;—I mean our retail trade. The exuberant display of wealth in our shops was the sight which most amazed a learned foreigner of distinction who lately resided among us: his expression, I remember, was, that '*they seemed to be bursting with opulence into the streets.*' The documents, which throw light on this subject, are not many; but they all meet in the same point: all concur in exhibiting an increase. The most material are the general licences [2] which the

[1] In a debate, December 30, 1796, on the return of Lord Malmesbury.—See 'Woodfall's Parliamentary Debates,' vol. xiii. p. 591.

[2] GENERAL LICENCES.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	44,030	1793 ..	45,568	
1788 ..	40,882	1794 ..	42,129	
1789 ..	39,917	1795 ..	43,350	
1790 ..	41,970	1796 ..	41,190	
	£166,799		£170,237	Increase to 1790 £3,438.
1791..	£44,240	4 Years to 1791	£167,009	Increase to 1791 £3,228.

law requires to be taken out by all dealers in excisable commodities. These seem to be subject to considerable fluctuations. They have not been so low in any year of the war, as in the years 1788 and 1789, nor ever so high in peace, as in the first year of the war. I should next state the licences to dealers in spirits and wine, but the change in them which took place in 1789 would give an unfair advantage to my argument. I shall therefore content myself with remarking that from the date of that change the spirit licences kept nearly the same level till the stoppage of the distilleries in 1795. If they dropped a little, and it was but little, the wine licences, during the same time, more than countervailed that loss to the revenue; and it is remarkable with regard to the latter, that in the year 1796, which was the lowest in the excise duties on wine itself, as well as in the quantity imported, more dealers in wine appeared to have been licensed, than in any former year, excepting the first year of the war. This fact may raise some doubt, whether the consumption has been lessened so much as, I believe, is commonly imagined. The only other retail-traders, whom I found so entered as to admit of being selected, are tea-dealers, and sellers of gold and silver plate; both of whom seem to have multiplied very much in proportion to their aggregate number[1]. I have kept apart

[1] DEALERS IN TEA.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	10,934	1793 ..	13,939	
1788 ..	11,949	1794 ..	14,315	
1789 ..	12,501	1795 ..	13,956	
1790 ..	13,126	1796 ..	14,830	
	£48,510		£57,040	Increase to 1790 £8,530.
1791 ..	£13,921	4 Years to 1791,	£51,497	Increase to 1791 £5,543.

one set of licensed sellers, because I am aware that our antagonists may be inclined to triumph a little, when I name auctioneers and auctions. They may be disposed to consider it as a sort of trade, which thrives by the distress of others. But if they will look at it a little more attentively, they will find their gloomy comfort vanish. The public income from these licences has risen with very great regularity, through a series of years, which all must admit to have been years of prosperity. It is remarkable, too, that in the year 1793, which was the greatest year of bankuptcies, these duties on auctioneers and auctions[1] fell below the mark of 1791 ; and in 1796, which year had one-fifth less than the accustomed average of bankruptcies,

SELLERS OF PLATE.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	6,593	1793 ..	8,178	
1788 ..	7,953	1794 ..	8,296	
1789 ..	7,348	1795 ..	8,128	
1790 ..	7,988	1796 ..	8,835	
	£29,882		£33,437	Increase to 1790 £3,555.
1791 ..	£8,327	4 Years to 1791,	£31,616	Increase to 1791 £1,821.

[1] AUCTIONS AND AUCTIONEERS.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£	
1787 ..	48,964	1793 ..	70,004	
1788 ..	53,993	1794 ..	82,659	
1789 ..	52,024	1795 ..	86,890	
1790 ..	53,156	1796 ..	109,594	
	£208,137		£349,147	Increase to 1790 £141,010.
1791 ..	£70,973	4 Years to 1791	£230,146	Increase to 1791 £119,001.

they mounted at once beyond all former examples. In concluding this general head, will you permit me, my dear sir, to bring to your notice a humble, but industrious, and laborious set of chapmen, against whom the vengeance of your House has sometimes been levelled, with what policy I need not stay to inquire, as they have escaped without much injury. The hawkers and pedlars[1], I am assured, are still doing well, though from some new arrangements respecting them made in 1789, it would be difficult to trace their proceedings in any satisfactory manner.

When such is the vigour of our traffic in its minutest ramifications, we may be persuaded that the root and the trunk are sound. When we see the life-blood of the state circulate so freely through the capillary vessels of the system. we scarcely need inquire if the heart performs its functions aright. But let us approach it; let us lay it bare, and watch the systole and diastole, as it now receives, and now pours forth the vital stream through all the members. The port of London has always supplied the main evidence of the state of our commerce. I know that, amidst all

[1] Since Mr. Burke's death, a fourth Report of the Committee of Finance has made its appearance. An account is there given from the Stamp Office of the gross produce of duties on Hawkers and Pedlars, for four years of peace and four of war. It is therefore added in the manner of the other tables.

HAWKERS AND PEDLARS.

Years of Peace.	£	Years of War.	£
1789 . .	6,132	1793 . .	6,042
1790 . .	6,708	1794 . .	6,104
1791 . .	6,482	1795 . .	6,795
1792 . .	6,008	1796 . .	7,882
	£25,330		£26,823
Increase in 4 Years of War			£1,493

the difficulties and embarrassments of the year 1793, from causes unconnected with and prior to the war, the tonnage of ships in the Thames actually rose. But I shall not go through a detail of official papers on this point. There is evidence which has appeared this very session before your House, infinitely more forcible and impressive to my apprehension than all the journals and ledgers of all the inspectors-general from the days of Davenant. It is such as cannot carry with it any sort of fallacy. It comes, not from one set, but from many opposite sets of witnesses, who all agree in nothing else; witnesses of the gravest and most unexceptionable character, and who confirm what they say, in the surest manner, by their conduct. Two different bills have been brought in for improving the port of London. I have it from very good intelligence that, when the project was first suggested from necessity, there were no less than eight different plans, supported by eight different bodies of subscribers. The cost of the least was estimated at two hundred thousand pounds, and of the most extensive, at twelve hundred thousand. The two, between which the contest now lies, substantially agree (as all the others must have done) in the motives and reasons of the preamble; but I shall confine myself to that bill which is proposed on the part of the mayor, aldermen, and common council, because I regard them as the best authority, and their language in itself is fuller and more precise. I certainly see them complain of the 'great delays, accidents, damages, losses, and extraordinary expenses, which are almost continually sustained, to the hindrance and discouragement of commerce, and the great injury of the public revenue.' But what are the causes to which they attribute their complaints? The first is, 'THAT FROM THE VERY GREAT AND PROGRESSIVE INCREASE OF THE NUMBER AND SIZE OF SHIPS AND OTHER VESSELS TRADING TO THE PORT OF LONDON; the river Thames is, in general, so much crowded, that the navigation of a considerable part of the river is rendered tedious

and dangerous; and there is much want of room for the safe and convenient mooring of vessels, and constant access to them.' The second is of the same nature. It is the want of regulations and arrangements, never before found necessary, for expedition and facility. The third is of another kind, but to the same effect; 'that the legal quays are too confined, and there is not sufficient accommodation for the landing and shipping of cargoes.' And the fourth and last is still different; they describe 'the avenues to the legal quays' (which, little more than a century since, the great fire of London opened and dilated beyond the measure of our then circumstances), 'to be now much too narrow and incommodious, for the great concourse of carts and other carriages usually passing and repassing there.' Thus our trade has grown too big for the ancient limits of art and nature. Our streets, our lanes, our shores, the river itself, which has so long been our pride, are impeded, and obstructed, and choked up by our riches. They are, like our shops, 'bursting with opulence.' To these misfortunes, to these distresses and grievances alone, we are told it is to be imputed that still more of our capital has not been pushed into the channel of our commerce, to roll back in its reflux still more abundant capital, and fructify the national treasury in its course. Indeed, my dear sir, when I have before my eyes this consentient testimony of the corporation of the city of London, the West India merchants, and all the other merchants who promoted the other plans, struggling and contending which of them shall be permitted to lay out their money in consonance with their testimony; I cannot turn aside to examine what one or two violent petitions, tumultuously voted by real or pretended liverymen of London, may have said of the utter destruction and annihilation of trade.

This opens a subject, on which every true lover of his country, and, at this crisis, every friend to the liberties of Europe, and of social order in every country, must dwell and expatiate with delight. I mean to wind up

all my proofs of our astonishing and almost incredible prosperity, with the valuable information given to the secret committee of the lords by the inspector-general. And here I am happy that I can administer an antidote to all despondence, from the same dispensary from which the first dose of poison was supposed to have come. The report of that committee is generally believed to have derived much benefit from the labours of the same noble lord, who was said, as the author of the pamphlet in 1795, to have led the way in teaching us to place all our hope on that very experiment, which he afterwards declared in his place to have been from the beginning utterly without hope. We have now his authority to say that, as far as our resources were concerned, the experiment was equally without necessity.

'It appears,' as the committee has very justly and satisfactorily observed, 'by the accounts of the value of the imports and exports for the last twenty years, produced by Mr. Irving, that the demand for cash to be sent abroad' (which, by the way, including the loan to the emperor, was nearly one-third less sent to the continent of Europe than in the seven years' war) 'was greatly compensated by a very large balance of commerce in favour of this kingdom; greater than was ever known in any preceding period. The value of the exports of the last year amounted, according to the valuation on which the accounts of the inspector-general are founded, to £30,424,184; which is more than double what it was in any year of the American war, and one-third more than it was on an average during the last peace, previous to the year 1792; and though the value of the imports to this country has, during the same peace, greatly increased, the excess of the value of the exports above that of the imports, which constitutes the balance of trade, has augmented even in a greater proportion.' These observations might perhaps be branched out into other points of view, but I shall leave them to your own active and ingenious mind. There is another and still more

important light in which the inspector-general's information may be seen; and that, as affording a comparison of some circumstances in this war with the commercial history of all our other wars in the present century.

In all former hostilities, our exports gradually declined in value, and then (with one single exception) ascended again till they reached and passed the level of the preceding peace. But this was a work of time, sometimes more, sometimes less slow. In Queen Anne's war, which began in 1702, it was an interval of ten years before this was effected. Nine years only were necessary in the war of 1739 for the same operation. The seven years' war saw the period much shortened: hostilities began in 1755; and in 1758, the fourth year of the war, the exports mounted above the peace-mark. There was, however, a distinguishing feature of that war, that our tonnage, to the very last moment, was in a state of great depression, while our commerce was chiefly carried on by foreign vessels. The American war was darkened with singular and peculiar adversity. Our exports never came near to their peaceful elevation, and our tonnage continued, with very little fluctuation, to subside lower and lower[1]. On the other hand, the present war, with regard to our commerce, has the white mark of as singular felicity. If from internal causes, as well as the consequences of hostilities, the tide ebbed in 1793, it rushed back again with a bore in the following year; and from that time has continued to swell, and run, every successive year, higher and higher into all our ports. The value of our exports last year above the year 1792 (the mere increase of our commerce during the war) is equal to the average value of all the exports during the wars of William and Anne.

[1] This account is extracted from different parts of Mr. Chalmers' estimate. It is but just to mention, that, in Mr. Chalmers' estimate, the sums are uniformly lower than those of the same year in Mr. Irving's account.

It has been already pointed out that our imports have not kept pace with our exports ; of course, on the face of the account, the balance of trade, both positively and comparatively considered, must have been much more than ever in our favour. In that early little tract of mine, to which I have already more than once referred, I made many observations on the usual method of computing that balance, as well as the usual objection to it that the entries at the Custom-house were not always true. As you probably remember them, I shall not repeat them here. On the one hand, I am not surprised that the same trite objection is perpetually renewed by the detractors of our national affluence ; and on the other hand I am gratified in perceiving that the balance of trade seems to be now computed in a manner much clearer, than it used to be, from those errors which I formerly noticed. The inspector-general appears to have made his estimate with every possible guard and caution. His opinion is entitled to the greatest respect. It was in substance (I shall again use the words of the report, as much better than my own), 'that the true balance of our trade amounted, on a medium of the four years preceding January, 1796, to upwards of £6,500,000 per annum, exclusive of the profits arising from our East and West India trade, which he estimates at upwards of £4,000,000 per annum ; exclusive of the profits derived from our fisheries.' So that including the fisheries, and making a moderate allowance for the exceedings, which Mr. Irving himself supposes, beyond his calculation, without reckoning what the public creditors themselves pay to themselves, and without taking one shilling from the stock of the landed interest ; our colonies, our oriental possessions, our skill and industry, our commerce, and navigation, at the commencement of this year, were pouring a new annual capital into the kingdom ; hardly half a million short of the whole interest of that tremendous debt, from which we are taught to shrink in dismay, as from an overwhelming and intolerable oppression.

If then the real state of this nation is such as I have described, and I am only apprehensive that you may think I have taken too much pains to exclude all doubt on this question; if no class is lessened in its numbers, or in its stock, or in its conveniences, or even its luxuries; if they build as many habitations, and as elegant and as commodious as ever, and furnish them with every chargeable decoration, and every prodigality of ingenious invention, that can be thought of by those who even encumber their necessities with superfluous accommodation; if they are as numerously attended; if their equipages are as splendid; if they regale at table with as much or more variety of plenty than ever; if they are clad in as expensive and changeful a diversity according to their tastes and modes; if they are not deterred from the pleasures of the field by the charges which government has wisely turned from the culture to the sports of the field; if the theatres are as rich, and as well filled, and greater, and at a higher price than ever; (and, what is more important than all) if it is plain from the treasures which are spread over the soil, or confided to the winds and the seas, that there are as many who are indulgent to their propensities of parsimony, as others to their voluptuous desires, and that the pecuniary capital grows instead of diminishing; on what ground are we authorized to say that a nation, gambolling in an ocean of superfluity, is undone by want? With what face can we pretend that they who have not denied any one gratification to any one appetite, have a right to plead poverty in order to famish their virtues, and to put their duties on short allowance? That they are to take the law from an imperious enemy, and can contribute no longer to the honour of their king, to the support of the independence of their country, to the salvation of that Europe, which, if it falls, must crush them with its gigantic ruins? How can they affect to sweat, and stagger, and groan, under their burdens, to whom the mines of Newfoundland, richer than those of Mexico and Peru, are now thrown in as

a make-weight in the scale of their exorbitant opulence? What excuse can they have to faint, and creep, and cringe, and prostrate themselves at the footstool of ambition and crime, who, during a short though violent struggle, which they have never supported with the energy of men, have amassed more to their annual accumulation than all the well-husbanded capital that enabled their ancestors, by long, and doubtful, and obstinate conflicts, to defend, and liberate, and vindicate the civilized world? But I do not accuse the people of England. As to the great majority of the nation, they have done whatever in their several ranks, and conditions, and descriptions, was required of them by their relative situations in society; and from those the great mass of mankind cannot depart, without the subversion of all public order. They look up to that government, which they obey that they might be protected. They ask to be led and directed by those rulers, whom Providence and the laws of their country have set over them, and under their guidance to walk in the ways of safety and honour. They have again delegated the greatest trust, which they have to bestow, to those faithful representatives who made their true voice heard against the disturbers and destroyers of Europe. They suffered, with unapproving acquiescence, solicitations, which they had in no shape desired, to an unjust and usurping power, whom they had never provoked, and whose hostile menaces they did not dread. When the exigencies of the public service could only be met by their voluntary zeal, they started forth with an ardour which outstripped the wishes of those who had injured them by doubting whether it might not be necessary to have recourse to compulsion. They have, in all things, reposed an enduring, but not an unreflecting confidence. That confidence demands a full return; and fixes a responsibility on the ministers entire and undivided. The people stands acquitted, if the war is not carried on in a manner suited to its objects. If the public honour is tarnished; if the public safety

suffers any detriment; the ministers, not the people, are to answer it, and they alone. Its armies, its navies, are given to them without stint or restriction. Its treasures are poured out at their feet. Its constancy is ready to second all their efforts. They are not to fear a responsibility for acts of manly adventure. The responsibility which they are to dread is, lest they should show themselves unequal to the expectation of a brave people. The more doubtful may be the constitutional and economical questions upon which they have received so marked a support, the more loudly they are called upon to support this great war, for the success of which their country is willing to supersede considerations of no slight importance. Where I speak of responsibility, I do not mean to exclude that species of it, which the legal powers of the country have a right finally to exact from those who abuse a public trust; but high as this is, there is a responsibility which attaches on them, from which the whole legitimate power of this kingdom cannot absolve them; there is a responsibility to conscience and to glory; a responsibility to the existing world, and to that posterity, which men of their eminence cannot avoid for glory or for shame; a responsibility to a tribunal, at which not only ministers, but kings and parliaments, but even nations themselves, must one day answer.

LETTER IV

TO THE EARL FITZWILLIAM

My dear Lord,

I am not sure that the best way of discussing any subject, except those that concern the abstracted sciences, is not somewhat in the way of dialogue. To this mode, however, there are two objections; the first, that it happens, as in the puppet-show, one man speaks for all the personages. An unnatural uniformity of tone is in a manner unavoidable. The other and more serious objection is that, as the author (if not an absolute sceptic) must have some opinion of his own to enforce, he will be continually tempted to enervate the arguments he puts into the mouth of his adversary, or to place them in a point of view most commodious for their refutation. There is, however, a sort of dialogue not quite so liable to these objections, because it approaches more nearly to truth and nature: it is called controversy. Here the parties speak for themselves. If the writer who attacks another's notions does not deal fairly with his adversary, the diligent reader has it always in his power, by resorting to the work examined, to do justice to the original author and to himself. For this reason you will not blame me, if, in my discussion of the merits of a Regicide Peace, I do not choose to trust to my own statements, but to bring forward along with them the arguments of the advocates for that measure. If I choose puny adversaries, writers of no estimation or authority, then you will justly blame me. I might as well bring in at once a fictitious speaker, and thus fall into all the

inconveniences of an imaginary dialogue. This I shall avoid; and I shall take no notice of any author, who my friends in town do not tell me is in estimation with those whose opinions he supports.

A piece has been sent to me, called 'Remarks on the apparent Circumstances of the War in the fourth Week of October, 1795,' with a French motto, '*Que faire encore une fois dans une telle nuit?—Attendre le jour.*' The very title seemed to me striking and peculiar, and to announce something uncommon. In the time I have lived to, I always seem to walk on enchanted ground. Everything is new, and, according to the fashionable phrase, revolutionary. In former days authors valued themselves upon the maturity and fullness of their deliberations. Accordingly they predicted (perhaps with more arrogance than reason) an eternal duration to their works. The quite contrary is our present fashion. Writers value themselves now on the instability of their opinions and the transitory life of their productions. On this kind of credit the modern institutors open their schools. They write for youth, and it is sufficient if the instruction 'lasts as long as a present love,—or as the painted silks and cottons of the season.'

The doctrines in this work are applied, for their standard, with great exactness to the shortest possible periods both of conception and duration. The title is 'Some Remarks on the *apparent* Circumstances of the War *in the fourth Week of October*, 1795.' The time is critically chosen. A month or so earlier would have made it the anniversary of a bloody Parisian September, when the French massacre one another. A day or two later would have carried it into a London November, the gloomy month in which it is said by a pleasant author that Englishmen hang and drown themselves. In truth, this work has a tendency to alarm us with symptoms of public suicide. However, there is one comfort to be taken even from the gloomy time of year. It is a rotting season. If what is brought to market is not good, it is not likely to keep long.

Even buildings run up in haste with untempered mortar in that humid weather, if they are ill-contrived tenements, do not threaten long to encumber the earth. The author tells us (and I believe he is the very first author that ever told such a thing to his readers) 'that the *entire fabric* of his speculations might be overset by unforseen vicissitudes;' and what is far more extraordinary, 'that even the *whole* consideration might be *varied whilst he was writing those pages*.' Truly, in my poor judgment, this circumstance formed a very substantial motive for his not publishing those ill-considered considerations at all. He ought to have followed the good advice of his motto; 'Que faire encore dans une telle nuit? Attendre le jour.' He ought to have waited till he had got a little more daylight on this subject. Night itself is hardly darker than the fogs of that time.

Finding the *last week in October* so particularly referred to, and not perceiving any particular event relative to the war, which happened on any of the days in that week, I thought it possible that they were marked by some astrological superstition, to which the greatest politicians have been subject. I therefore had recourse to my Rider's Almanack. There I found indeed something that characterized the work, and that gave directions concerning the sudden political and natural variations, and for eschewing the maladies, that are most prevalent in that aguish intermittent season, 'the last week of October.' On that week the sagacious astrologer, Rider, in his note on the third column of the calendar side, teaches us to expect '*variable and cold weather*;' but instead of encouraging us to trust ourselves to the haze and mist and doubtful lights of that changeable week, on the answerable part of the opposite page, he gives us a salutary caution (indeed it is very nearly in the words of the author's motto): '*Avoid* (says he) *being out late at night, and in foggy weather, for a cold now caught may last the whole winter*[1].' This ingenious

[1] Here I have fallen into an unintentional mistake.

author, who disdained the prudence of the almanac, walked out in the very fog he complains of, and has led us a very unseasonable airing at that time. Whilst this noble writer, by the vigour of an excellent constitution, formed for the violent changes he prognosticates, may shake off the importunate rheum and malignant influenza of this disagreeable week, a whole parliament may go on spitting and snivelling, and wheezing and coughing, during a whole session. All this from listening to variable, hebdomadal politicians who run away from their opinions without giving us a month's warning; and for not listening to the wise and friendly admonitions of Dr. Cardanus Rider, who never apprehends he may change his opinions before his pen is out of his hand, but always enables us to lay in, at least, a year's stock of useful information.

At first I took comfort. I said to myself that if I should, as I fear I must, oppose the doctrines of *the last week of October*, it is probable that, by this time, they are no longer those of the eminent writer, to whom they are attributed. He gives us hopes that long before this he may have embraced the direct contrary sentiments. If I am found in a conflict with those of the last week of October, I may be in full agreement with those of the last week in December, or the first week in January 1796. But a second edition, and a French translation (for the benefit, I must suppose, of the new regicide Directory), have let down a little of these flattering hopes. We and the Directory know that the author, whatever changes his works seemed made to indicate, like a weathercock grown rusty, remains just where he was in the last week of October. It is true, that his protest against binding him to his opinions, and his reservation of a right to whatever opinions he pleases, remain in

Rider's Almanac for 1794 lay before me; and, in truth, I then had no other. For variety, that sage astrologer has made some small changes on the weather side of 1795; but the caution is the same on the opposite page of instruction.

their full force. This variability is pleasant, and shows a fertility of fancy;

Qualis in aethereo felix Vertumnus Olympo
Mille habet ornatus, mille decenter habet.

Yet, doing all justice to the sportive variability of these weekly, daily, or hourly, speculators, shall I be pardoned, if I attempt a word on the part of us simple country folk? It is not good for *us*, however it may be so for great statesmen, that we should be treated with variable politics. I consider different relations as prescribing a different conduct. I allow that, in transactions with an enemy, a minister may, and often must, vary his demands with the day, possibly with the hour. With an enemy, a fixed plan, variable arrangements. This is the rule the nature of the transaction prescribes. But all this belongs to treaty. All these shiftings and changes are a sort of secret amongst the parties, till a definite settlement is brought about. Such is the spirit of the proceedings in the doubtful and transitory state of things between enmity and friendship. In this change the subjects of the transformation are by nature carefully wrapt up in their cocoons. The gay ornament of summer is not seemly in his aurelia state. This mutability is allowed to a foreign negotiator; but when a great politician condescends publicly to instruct his own countrymen on a matter which may fix their fate for ever his, opinions ought not to be diurnal, or even weekly. These ephemerides of politics are not made for our slow and coarse understandings. Our appetite demands a *piece of resistance*. We require some food that will stick to the ribs. We call for sentiments, to which we can attach ourselves; sentiments, in which we can take an interest; sentiments, on which we can warm, on which we can ground some confidence in ourselves or in others. We do not want a largess of inconstancy. Poor souls, we have enough of that sort of poverty at home. There is a difference, too, between deliberation and doctrine: a man ought to

be decided in his opinions before he attempts to teach. His fugitive lights may serve himself in some unknown region, but they cannot free us from the effects of the error into which we have been betrayed. His active Will-o'-the-Wisp may be gone nobody can guess where, whilst he leaves us bemired and benighted in the bog.

Having premised these few reflections upon this new mode of teaching a lesson, which whilst the scholar is getting by heart the master forgets, I come to the lesson itself. On the fullest consideration of it, I am utterly incapable of saying with any great certainty what it is, in the detail, that the author means to affirm or deny, to dissuade or recommend. His march is mostly oblique, and his doctrine rather in the way of insinuation than of dogmatic assertion. It is not only fugitive in its duration, but is slippery in the extreme, whilst it lasts. Examining it part by part, it seems almost everywhere to contradict itself; and the author, who claims the privilege of varying his opinions, has exercised this privilege in every section of his remarks. For this reason, amongst others, I follow the advice, which the able writer gives in his last page, which is 'to consider the *impression* of what he has urged, taken from the *whole*, and not from detached paragraphs.' That caution was not absolutely necessary. I should think it unfair to the author and to myself, to have proceeded otherwise. This author's *whole*, however, like every other whole, cannot be so well comprehended without some reference to the parts; but they shall be again referred to the whole. Without this latter attention, several of the passages would certainly remain covered with an impenetrable and true oracular obscurity.

The great general pervading purpose of the whole pamphlet is to reconcile us to peace with the present usurpation in France. In this general drift of the author I can hardly be mistaken. The other purposes, less general and subservient to the preceding scheme, are to show, first, that the time of the Remarks was the favourable time for making that peace upon our side;

secondly, that on the enemy's side their disposition towards the acceptance of such terms, as he is pleased to offer, was rationally to be expected; the third purpose was to make some sort of disclosure of the terms, which, if the regicides are pleased to grant them, this nation ought to be contented to accept: these form the basis of the negotiation, which the author, whoever he is, proposes to open.

Before I consider these Remarks along with the other reasonings, which I hear on the same subject, I beg leave to recall to your mind the observation I made early in our correspondence, and which ought to attend us quite through the discussion of this proposed peace, amity, or fraternity, or whatever you may call it; that is, the real quality and character of the party you have to deal with. This I find, as a thing of no importance, has everywhere escaped the author of the October Remarks. That hostile power, to the period of the fourth week in that month, has been ever called and considered as an usurpation. In that week, for the first time, it changed its name of an usurped power, and took the simple name of *France*. The word France is slipped in just as if the government stood exactly as before that revolution which has astonished, terrified, and almost overpowered Europe. 'France,' says the author, 'will do this;' 'it is the interest of France;' 'the returning honour and generosity of France,' &c., &c., always merely France; just as if we were in a common political war with an old recognized member of the commonwealth of Christian Europe; and as if our dispute had turned upon a mere matter of territorial or commercial controversy, which a peace might settle by the imposition or the taking off a duty, with the gain or the loss of a remote island, or a frontier town or two, on the one side or the other. This shifting of persons could not be done without the hocus-pocus of *abstraction*. We have been in a grievous error; we thought that we had been at war with *rebels* against the lawful government, but that we were friends and allies of what is properly France; friends and allies

to the legal body politic of France. But by sleight of hand the Jacobins are clean vanished, and it is France we have got under our cup. 'Blessings on his soul, that first invented sleep,' said Don Sancho Panza the wise! All those blessings, and ten thousand times more, on him, who found out abstraction, personification, and impersonals. In certain cases they are the first of all soporifics. Terribly alarmed we should be if things were proposed to us in the *concrete*; and if fraternity was held out to us with the individuals, who compose this France, by their proper names and descriptions: if we were told that it was very proper to enter into the closest bonds of amity and good correspondence with the devout, pacific, and tender-hearted Sieyes, with the all-accomplished Reubel, with the humane guillotinists of Bourdeaux, Tallien and Isabeau; with the meek butcher Legendre, and with 'the returned humanity and generosity' (that had been only on a visit abroad) of the virtuous regicide brewer Santerre. This would seem at the outset a very strange scheme of amity and concord;—nay, though we had held out to us, as an additional douceur, an assurance of the cordial fraternal embrace of our pious and patriotic countryman Thomas Paine. But plain truth would here be shocking and absurd; therefore comes in *abstraction* and personification. 'Make your peace with France.' That word *France* sounds quite as well as any other; and it conveys no idea but that of a very pleasant country, and very hospitable inhabitants. Nothing absurd and shocking in amity and good correspondence with *France*. Permit me to say that I am not yet well acquainted with this new-coined France, and without a careful assay I am not willing to receive it in currency in place of the old Louis d'or.

Having therefore slipped the persons with whom we are to treat out of view, we are next to be satisfied that the French revolution, which this peace is to fix and consolidate, ought to give us no just cause of apprehension. Though he labours this point, yet he confesses a fact (indeed he could not conceal it),

which renders all his labours utterly fruitless. He confesses that the regicide means to *dictate* a pacification, and that this pacification, according to their decree passed but a very few days before his publication appeared, is to 'unite to their empire either, in possession or dependence, new barriers, many frontier places of strength, a large sea-coast, and many seaports:' he ought to have stated it, that they would annex to their territory a country about a third as large as France, and much more than half as rich; and in a situation the most important for command that it would be possible for her anywhere to possess.

To remove this terror (even if the regicides should carry their point), and to give us perfect repose with regard to their empire whatever they may acquire, or whomsoever they might destroy, he raises a doubt 'whether France will not be ruined by *retaining* these conquests, and whether she will not wholly lose that preponderance, which she has held in the scale of European powers, and will not eventually be destroyed by the effect of her present successes, or, at least, whether, so far as the *political interests of England are concerned,* she [France] will remain an object of *as much jealousy and alarm as she was under the reign of a monarch.*' Here indeed is a paragraph full of meaning! It gives matter for meditation almost in every word of it. The secret of the pacific politicians is out. This republic at all hazards is to be maintained. It is to be confined within some bounds if we can; if not, with every possible acquisition of power, it is still to be cherished and supported. It is the return of the monarchy we are to dread, and therefore we ought to pray for the permanence of the regicide authority. *Esto perpetua* is the devout ejaculation of our Fra Paolo for the republic one and indivisible. It was the monarchy that rendered France dangerous—regicide neutralizes all the acrimony of that power, and renders it safe and social. The October speculator is of opinion that monarchy is of so poisonous a quality, that a moderate territorial power is far more dangerous

to its neighbours under that abominable regimen than the greatest empire in the hands of a republic. This is Jacobinism sublimed and exalted into most pure and perfect essence. It is a doctrine, I admit, made to allure and captivate, if anything in the world can, the Jacobin Directory, to mollify the ferocity of regicide, and to persuade those patriotic hangmen, after their reiterated oaths for our extirpation, to admit this well-humbled nation to the fraternal embrace. I do not wonder that this tub of October has been racked off into a French cask. It must make its fortune at Paris. That translation seems the language the most suited to these sentiments. Our author tells the French Jacobins that the political interests of Great Britain are in perfect unison with the principles of their government; that they may take and keep the keys of the civilized world, for they are safe in their unambitious and faithful custody. We say to them,—we may, indeed, wish you to be a little less murderous, wicked, and atheistical, for the sake of morals: we may think it were better you were less new-fangled in your speech, for the sake of grammar: but, as *politicians*, provided you keep clear of monarchy, all our fears, alarms, and jealousies, are at an end: at least they sink into nothing in comparison of our dread of your detestable royalty. A flatterer of Cardinal Mazarin said, when that minister had just settled the match between the young Louis XIV and a daughter of Spain, that this alliance had the effect of faith and had removed mountains;—that the Pyrenees were levelled by that marriage. You may now compliment Reubel in the same spirit on the miracles of regicide, and tell him that the guillotine of Louis XVI had consummated a marriage between Great Britain and France, which dried up the Channel, and restored the two countries to the unity, which, it is said, they had before the unnatural rage of seas and earthquakes had broke off their happy junction. It will be a fine subject for the poets, who are to prophesy the blessings of this peace.

I am now convinced that the remarks of the last week of October cannot come from the author to whom they are given; they are such a direct contradiction to the style of manly indignation, with which he spoke of those miscreants and murderers in his excellent memorial to the States of Holland—to that very state which the author, who presumes to personate him, does not find it contrary to the political interests of England to leave in the hands of these very miscreants, against whom on the part of England he took so much pains to animate their republic. This cannot be; and, if this argument wanted anything to give it new force, it is strengthened by an additional reason, that is irresistible. Knowing that noble person, as well as myself, to be under very great obligations to the crown, I am confident he would not so very directly contradict, even in the paroxysm of his zeal against monarchy, the declarations made in the name and with the fullest approbation of our sovereign, his master, and our common benefactor. In those declarations you will see that the king, instead of being sensible of greater alarm and jealousy from a neighbouring crowned head than from these regicides, attributes all the dangers of Europe to the latter. Let this writer hear the description given in the royal declaration of the scheme of power of these miscreants, as '*a system destructive of all public order; maintained by proscriptions, exiles, and confiscations without number; by arbitrary imprisonments; by massacres, which cannot be remembered without horror; and at length by the execrable murder of a just and beneficent sovereign, and of the illustrious princess, who with an unshaken firmness has shared all the misfortunes of her royal consort, his protracted sufferings, his cruel captivity, and his ignominious death.*' After thus describing, with an eloquence and energy equalled only by its truth, the means by which this usurped power had been acquired and maintained, that government is characterized with equal force. His majesty, far from thinking monarchy in France to be a greater object

of jealousy than the regicide usurpation, calls upon the French to re-establish '*a monarchical government*' for the purpose of shaking off '*the yoke of a sanguinary anarchy; of that anarchy, which has broken the most sacred bonds of society, dissolved all the relations of civil life, violated every right, confounded every duty; which uses the name of liberty to exercise the most cruel tyranny, to annihilate all property, to seize on all possessions; which founds its power on the pretended consent of the people, and itself carries fire and sword through extensive provinces for having demanded their laws, their religion, and their rightful sovereign.*'

'That strain I heard was of a higher mood.' That declaration of our sovereign was worthy of his throne. It is in a style, which neither the pen of the writer of October, nor such a poor crow-quill as mine, can ever hope to equal. I am happy to enrich my letter with this fragment of nervous and manly eloquence, which, if it had not emanated from the awful authority of a throne, if it were not recorded amongst the most valuable monuments of history, and consecrated in the archives of states, would be worthy, as a private composition, to live for ever in the memory of men.

In those admirable pieces does his majesty discover this new opinion of his political security in having the chair of the scorner, that is, the discipline of atheism, and the block of regicide, set up by his side, elevated on the same platform, and shouldering, with the vile image of their grim and bloody idol, the inviolable majesty of his throne? The sentiments of these declarations are the very reverse: they could not be other. Speaking of the spirit of that usurpation, the royal manifesto describes, with perfect truth, its internal tyranny to have been established as the very means of shaking the security of all other states; as '*disposing arbitrarily of the poverty and blood of the inhabitants of France, in order to disturb the tranquillity of other nations, and to render all Europe the theatre of the same crimes and the same misfortunes.*' It was but a natural inference from this fact that the royal

manifesto does not at all rest the justification of this war on common principles: '*That it was not only to defend his own rights, and those of his allies*'—but '*that all the dearest interests of his people imposed upon him a duty still more important—that of exerting his efforts for the preservation of civil society itself as happily established among the nations of Europe.*' On that ground, the protection offered is to those, who, by 'declaring for a *monarchical government*, shall shake off the yoke of a sanguinary anarchy.'—It is for that purpose the declaration calls on them to join the standard of an '*hereditary monarchy*;' declaring that the *safety and peace* of this kingdom and the powers of Europe '*materially depend upon the re-establishment of order in France.*' His majesty does not hesitate to declare that '*the re-establishment of monarchy in the person of Louis XVII, and the lawful heirs of his crown, appears to him* [his majesty] *the best mode of accomplishing these just and salutary views.*'

This is what his majesty does not hesitate to declare relative to the political safety and peace of his kingdom and of Europe, and with regard to France under her ancient hereditary monarchy in the course and order of legal succession;—but in comes a gentleman in the fag end of October, dripping with the fogs of that humid and uncertain season, and does not hesitate in diameter to contradict this wise and just royal declaration; and stoutly, on his part, to make a counter-declaration, that France, so far as the political interests of England are concerned, will not remain, under the despotism of regicide, and with the better part of Europe in her hands, so much an object of jealousy and alarm as she was under the reign of a monarch. When I hear the master and reason on one side, and the servant and his single and unsupported assertion on the other, my part is taken.

This is what the Octobrist says of the political interests of England, which it looks as if he completely disconnected with those of all other nations. But not quite so; he just allows it possible (with an 'at least')

that the other powers may not find it quite their interest, that their territories should be conquered, and their subjects tyrannized over by the regicides. No fewer than ten sovereign princes had, some the whole, all a very considerable part of their dominion under the yoke of that dreadful faction. Amongst these was to be reckoned the first republic in the world, and the closest ally of this kingdom, which, under the insulting name of an independency, is under her iron yoke; and, as long as a faction averse to the old government is suffered there to domineer, cannot be otherwise. I say nothing of the Austrian Netherlands, countries of a vast extent, and amongst the most fertile and populous of Europe; and, with regard to us, most critically situated. The rest will readily occur to you.

But if there are yet existing any people, like me, old-fashioned enough to consider that we have an important part of our very existence beyond our limits, and who therefore stretch their thoughts beyond the pomoerium of England, for them too he has a comfort, which will remove all their jealousies and alarms about the extent of the empire of regicide. '*These conquests eventually will be the cause of her destruction.*' So that they, who hate the cause of usurpation and dread the power of France under any form, are to wish her to be a conqueror, in order to accelerate her ruin. A little more conquest would be still better. Will he tell us what dose of dominion is to be the *quantum sufficit* for her destruction, for she seems very voracious of the food of her distemper? To be sure she is ready to perish with repletion; she has a *boulimia*, and hardly has bolted down one state, than she calls for two or three more. There is a good deal of wit in all this; but it seems to me (with all respect to the author) to be carrying the joke a great deal too far. I cannot yet think that the armies of the allies were of this way of thinking; and that, when they evacuated all these countries, it was a stratagem of war to decoy France into ruin—or that,

if in a treaty we should surrender them for ever into the hands of the usurpation (the lease, the author supposes), it is a master-stroke of policy to effect the destruction of a formidable rival, and to render her no longer an object of jealousy and alarm. This, I assure the author, will infinitely facilitate the treaty. The usurpers will catch at this bait, without minding the hook, which this crafty angler for the Jacobin gudgeons of the new Directory has so dexterously placed under it.

Every symptom of the exacerbation of the public malady is, with him (as with the doctor in Molière), a happy prognostic of recovery. Flanders gone—*tant mieux*. Holland subdued—charming! Spain beaten, and all the hither Germany conquered. Bravo! Better and better still! But they will retain all their conquests on a treaty! Best of all! What a delightful thing it is to have a gay physician, who sees all things, as the French express it, *couleur de rose*! What an escape we have had, that we and our allies were not the conquerors. By these conquests, previous to her utter destruction, she is 'wholly to lose that preponderance, which she held in the scale of the European powers.' Bless me! this new system of France, after changing all other laws, reverses the law of gravitation. By throwing in weight after weight, her scale rises; and will, by and by, kick the beam. Certainly there is one sense in which she loses her preponderance: that is, she is no longer preponderant against the countries she has conquered. They are part of herself. But I beg the author to keep his eyes fixed on the scales for a moment longer, and then to tell me in downright earnest, whether he sees hitherto any signs of her losing preponderance by an augmentation of weight and power. Has she lost her preponderance over Spain, by her influence in Spain? Are there any signs that the conquest of Savoy and Nice begins to lessen her preponderance over Switzerland and the Italian states—or that the canton of Berne, Genoa and Tuscany, for example, have taken

arms against her, or that Sardinia is more adverse than ever to a treacherous pacification? Was it in the last week of October that the German states showed that Jacobin France was losing her preponderance? Did the King of Prussia, when he delivered into her safe custody his territories on this side of the Rhine, manifest any tokens of his opinion of her loss of preponderance? Look on Sweden and on Denmark: is her preponderance less visible there?

It is true that, in a course of ages, empires have fallen, and, in the opinion of some, not in mine, by their own weight. Sometimes they have been unquestionably embarrassed in their movements by the dissociated situation of their dominions. Such was the case of the empire of Charles V and his successor. It might be so of others. But so compact a body of empire—so fitted in all the parts for mutual support—with a frontier by nature and art so impenetrable; with such facility of breaking out, with irresistible force, from every quarter, was never seen in such an extent of territory from the beginning of time, as in that empire which the Jacobins possessed in October 1795, and which Boissy d'Anglas, in his report, settled as the law for Europe, and the dominion assigned by nature for the republic of regicide. But this empire is to be her ruin, and to take away all alarm and jealousy on the part of England, and to destroy her preponderance over the miserable remains of Europe.

These are choice speculations, with which the author amuses himself, and tries to divert us, in the blackest hours of the dismay, defeat and calamity of all civilized nations. They have but one fault, that they are directly contrary to the common sense and common feeling of mankind. If I had but one hour to live, I would employ it in decrying this wretched system, and die with my pen in my hand to mark out the dreadful consequences of receiving an arrangement of empire dictated by the despotism of regicide to my own country, and to the lawful sovereigns of the Christian world.

I trust I shall hardly be told, in palliation of this shameful system of politics, that the author expresses his sentiments only as doubts. In such things it may be truly said that 'once to doubt is once to be resolved.' It would be a strange reason for wasting the treasures and shedding the blood of our country, to prevent arrangements on the part of another power, of which we were doubtful whether they might not be even to our advantage, and render our neighbour, less than before, the object of our jealousy and alarm. In this doubt there is much decision. No nation would consent to carry on a war of scepticism. But the fact is, this expression of doubt is only a mode of putting an opinion, when it is not the drift of the author to overturn the doubt. Otherwise, the doubt is never stated as the author's own, nor left, as here it is, unanswered. Indeed, the mode of stating the most decided opinions in the form of questions is so little uncommon, particularly since the excellent queries of the excellent Berkeley, that it became for a good while a fashionable mode of composition.

Here then the author of the fourth week of October is ready for the worst, and would strike the bargain of peace on these conditions. I must leave it to you and to every considerate man to reflect upon the effect of this on any continental alliances, present or future, and whether it would be possible (if this book was thought of the least authority) that its maxims, with regard to our political interest, must not naturally push them to be beforehand with us in the fraternity with regicide, and thus not only strip us of any steady alliance at present, but leave us without any of that communion of interest, which could produce alliances in future. Indeed, with these maxims, we should be well divided from the world.

Notwithstanding this new kind of barrier and security that is found against her ambition in her conquests, yet in the very same paragraph he admits, that 'for the *present* at least, it is subversive of the balance of power.' This, I confess, is not a direct

contradiction, because the benefits, which he promises himself from it, according to his hypothesis, are future and more remote.

So disposed is this author to peace that, having laid a comfortable foundation for our security in the greatness of her empire, he has another in reserve, if that should fail, upon quite a contrary ground;—that is, a speculation of her crumbling to pieces and being thrown into a number of little separate republics. After paying the tribute of humanity to those who will be ruined by all these changes, on the whole, he is of opinion that 'the change might be compatible with general tranquillity, and with the establishment of a peaceful and prosperous commerce among nations.' Whether France be great or small, firm and entire, or dissipated and divided, all is well; provided we can have peace with her.

But, without entering into speculations about her dismemberment, whilst she is adding great nations to her empire, is it then quite so certain that the dissipation of France into such a cluster of petty republics would be so very favourable to the true balance of power in Europe, as this author imagines it would be, and to the commerce of nations? I greatly differ from him. I perhaps shall prove in a future letter, with the political map of Europe before my eye, that the general liberty and independence of the great Christian commonwealth could not exist with such a dismemberment; unless it were followed (as probably enough it would) by the dismemberment of every other considerable country in Europe: and what convulsions would arise in the constitution of every state in Europe, it is not easy to conjecture in the mode, impossible not to foresee in the mass. Speculate on, good my lord! provided you ground no part of your politics on such unsteady speculations. But, as to any practice to ensue, are we not yet cured of the malady of speculating on the circumstances of things totally different from those in which we live and move? Five years has this monster continued whole and entire

in all its members. Far from falling into a division within itself, it is augmented by tremendous additions. We cannot bear to look that frightful form in the face as it is, and in its own actual shape. We dare not be wise. We have not the fortitude of rational fear; we will not provide for our future safety; but we endeavour to hush the cries of present timidity by guesses at what may be hereafter,—'to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow.'—Is this our style of talk, 'when all our yesterdays have lighted fools the way to dusty death?' Talk not to me of what swarm of republics may come from this carcass! It is no carcass. Now, now, whilst we are talking, it is full of life and action. What say you to the regicide empire of to-day? Tell me, my friend, do its terrors appal you into an abject submission, or rouse you to a vigorous defence? But do—I no longer prevent it—do go on—look into futurity. Has this empire nothing to alarm you, when all struggle against it is over, when mankind shall be silent before it, when all nations shall be disarmed, disheartened, and *truly divided* by a treacherous peace? Its malignity towards humankind will subsist with undiminished heat, whilst the means of giving it effect must proceed, and every means of resisting it must inevitably and rapidly decline.

Against alarm on their politic and military empire these are the writer's sedative remedies. But he leaves us sadly in the dark with regard to the moral consequences, which he states have threatened to demolish a system of civilization, under which his country enjoys a prosperity unparalleled in the history of man:—we have emerged from our first terrors, but here we sink into them again; however, only to shake them off upon the credit of his being a man of very sanguine hopes.

Against the moral terrors of this successful empire of barbarism, though he has given us no consolation here, in another place he has formed other securities; securities, indeed, which will make even the enormity of the crimes and atrocities of France a benefit to the

world. We are to be cured by her diseases. We are to grow proud of our constitution upon the distempers of theirs. Governments throughout all Europe are to become much stronger by this event. This, too, comes in the favourite mode of *doubt*, and *perhaps*. 'To those,' he says, 'who meditate on the workings of the human mind, a doubt may perhaps arise, whether the effects, which I have described' [namely, the change he supposes to be wrought on the public mind with regard to the French doctrines] 'though *at present* a salutary check to the dangerous spirit of innovation, may not prove favourable to abuses of power, by creating a timidity in the just cause of liberty.' Here the current of our apprehensions takes a contrary course. Instead of trembling for the existence of our government from the spirit of licentiousness and anarchy, the author would make us believe we are to tremble for our liberties, from the great accession of power which is to accrue to government.

I believe I have read in some author, who criticized the productions of the famous Jurieu, that it is not very wise in people, who dash away in prophecy, to fix the time of accomplishment at too short a period. Mr. Brothers may meditate upon this at his leisure. He was a melancholy prognosticator, and has had the fate of melancholy men. But they who prophesy pleasant things, get great present applause; and in days of calamity people have something else to think of: they lose, in their feeling of their distress, all memory of those who flattered them in their prosperity. But merely for the credit of the prediction, nothing could have happened more unluckily for the noble lord's sanguine expectations of the amendment of the public mind, and the consequent greater security to government from the examples in France, than what happened in the week after the publication of his hebdomadal system. I am not sure it was not in the very week, one of the most violent and dangerous seditions broke out, that we have seen in several years. —This sedition, menacing to the public security,

endangering the sacred person of the king, and violating in the most audacious manner the authority of parliament, surrounded our sovereign with a murderous yell and war-whoop for that peace, which the noble lord considers as a cure for all domestic disturbances and dissatisfactions.

So far as to this general cure for popular disorders. As for government, the two Houses of Parliament, instead of being guided by the speculations of the fourth week in October, and throwing up new barriers against the dangerous power of the crown, which the noble lord considered as no unplausible subject of apprehension, the two Houses of Parliament thought fit to pass two acts for the further strengthening of that very government against a most dangerous and wide-spread faction.

Unluckily, too, for this kind of sanguine speculation, on the very first day of the ever-famed 'last week of October,' a large, daring and seditious meeting was publicly held, from which meeting this atrocious attempt against the sovereign publicly originated.

No wonder that the author should tell us that the whole consideration might be varied *whilst he was writing those pages*. In one, and that the most material, instance, his speculations not only might be, but were at that very time, entirely overset. Their war-cry for peace with France was the same with that of this gentle author, but in a different note. His is the *gemitus columbae*, cooing and wooing fraternity; theirs the funeral screams of birds of night calling for their ill-omened paramours. But they are both songs of courtship. These regicides considered a regicide peace as a cure for all their evils; and, so far as I can find, they showed nothing at all of the timidity which the noble lord apprehends in what they call the just cause of liberty.

However, it seems that, notwithstanding these awkward appearances with regard to the strength of government, he has still his fears and doubts about our liberties. To a free people, this would be a matter

of alarm; but this physician of October has in his shop all sorts of salves for all sorts of sores. It is curious that they all come from the inexhaustible drug-shop of the regicide dispensary. It costs him nothing to excite terror, because he lays it at his pleasure. He finds a security for this danger to liberty from the wonderful wisdom to be taught to kings, to nobility, and even to the lowest of the people, by the late transactions.

I confess I was always blind enough to regard the French revolution in the act, and much more in the example, as one of the greatest calamities that had ever fallen upon mankind. I now find that in its effects it is to be the greatest of all blessings. If so, we owe *amende honorable* to the Jacobins. They, it seems, were right—and if they were right a little earlier than we are, it only shows that they exceeded us in sagacity. If they brought out their right ideas somewhat in a disorderly manner, it must be remembered that great zeal produces some irregularity; but, when greatly in the right, it must be pardoned by those, who are very regularly and temperately in the wrong. The master Jacobins had told me this a thousand times. I never believed the masters; nor do I now find myself disposed to give credit to the disciple. I will not much dispute with our author, which party has the best of this revolution;—that which is from thence to learn wisdom, or that which from the same event has obtained power. The dispute on the preference of strength to wisdom may perhaps be decided as Horace has decided the controversy between art and nature. I do not like to leave all the power to my adversary, and to secure nothing to myself but the untimely wisdom that is taught by the consequences of folly. I do not like my share in the partition, because to his strength my adversary may possibly add a good deal of cunning, whereas my wisdom may totally fail in producing to me the same degree of strength. But to descend from the author's generalities a little nearer to meaning, the security given to

liberty is this, 'that governments will have learned not to precipitate themselves into embarrassments by speculative wars. Sovereigns and princes will not forget that steadiness, moderation, and economy are the best supports of the eminence on which they stand.' There seems to me a good deal of oblique reflection in this lesson. As to the lesson itself, it is at all times a good one. One would think, however, by this formal introduction of it as a recommendation of the arrangements proposed by the author, it had never been taught before, either by precept or by experience; and that these maxims are discoveries reserved for a regicide peace. But is it permitted to ask, what security it affords to the liberty of the subject, that the prince is pacific or frugal? The very contrary has happened in our history. Our best securities for freedom have been obtained from princes, who were either warlike, or prodigal, or both.

Although the amendment of princes, in these points, can have no effect in quieting our apprehensions for liberty on account of the strength to be acquired to government by a regicide peace, I allow that the avoiding of speculative wars may possibly be an advantage; provided I well understand what the author means by a speculative war. I suppose he means a war grounded on speculative advantages, and not wars founded on a just speculation of danger. Does he mean to include this war, which we are now carrying on, amongst those speculative wars, which this Jacobin peace is to teach sovereigns to avoid hereafter? If so, it is doing the party an important service. Does he mean that we are to avoid such wars as that of the grand alliance, made on a speculation of danger to the independence of Europe? I suspect he has a sort of retrospective view to the American war, as a speculative war, carried on by England upon one side, and by Louis XVI on the other. As to our share of that war, let reverence to the dead, and respect to the living, prevent us from reading lessons of this kind at their expense. I don't know how far

the author may find himself at liberty to wanton on that subject, but, for my part, I entered into a coalition, which, when I had no longer a duty relative to that business, made me think myself bound in honour not to call it up without necessity. But if he puts England out of the question, and reflects only on Louis XVI, I have only to say, 'Dearly has he answered it.' I will not defend him. But all those, who pushed on the revolution by which he was deposed, were much more in fault than he was. They have murdered him, and have divided his kingdom as a spoil; but they who are the guilty are not they who furnish the example. They, who reign through his fault, are not among those sovereigns, who are likely to be taught to avoid speculative wars by the murder of their master. I think the author will not be hardy enough to assert that they have shown less disposition to meddle in the concerns of that very America, than he did, and in a way not less likely to kindle the flame of speculative war. Here is one sovereign not yet reclaimed by these healing examples. Will he point out the other sovereigns, who are to be reformed by this peace? Their wars may not be speculative. But the world will not be much mended by turning wars from unprofitable and speculative to practical and lucrative, whether the liberty or the repose of mankind is regarded. If the author's new sovereign in France is not reformed by the example of his own revolution, that revolution has not added much to the security and repose of Poland, for instance, or taught the three great partitioning powers more moderation in their second, than they had shown in their first, division of that devoted country. The first division, which preceded these destructive examples, was moderation itself, in comparison of what has been done since the period of the author's amendment.

This paragraph is written with something of a studied obscurity. If it means anything, it seems to hint as if sovereigns were to learn moderation, and an attention to the liberties of their people, from *the fate of the*

sovereigns who have suffered in this war, and eminently of Louis XVI.

Will he say whether the King of Sardinia's horrible tyranny was the cause of the loss of Savoy and of Nice? What lesson of moderation does it teach the Pope? I desire to know whether his holiness is to learn not to massacre his subjects, nor to waste and destroy such beautiful countries as that of Avignon, lest he should call to their assistance that great deliverer of nations, *Jourdan Coupe-Tête*? What lessons does it give of moderation to the emperor, whose predecessor never put one man to death after a general rebellion of the Low Countries, that the regicides never spared man, woman, or child, whom they but suspected of dislike to their usurpations? What, then, are all these lessons about the *softening* the character of sovereigns by this regicide peace? On reading this section one would imagine that the poor tame sovereigns of Europe had been a sort of furious wild beasts, that stood in need of some uncommonly rough discipline to subdue the ferocity of their savage nature.

As to the example to be learnt from the murder of Louis XVI, if a lesson to kings is not derived from his fate, I do not know whence it can come. The author, however, ought not to have left us in the dark upon that subject, to break our shins over his hints and insinuations. Is it, then, true that this unfortunate monarch drew his punishment upon himself by his want of moderation, and his oppressing the liberties, of which he had found his people in possession? Is not the direct contrary the fact? And is not the example of this revolution the very reverse of anything which can lead to that *softening* of character in princes, which the author supposes as a security to the people; and has brought forward as a recommendation to fraternity with those, who have administered that happy emollient in the murder of their king, and the slavery and desolation of their country?

But the author does not confine the benefit of the regicide lesson to kings alone. He has a diffusive

bounty. Nobles, and men of property, will likewise be greatly reformed. They too will be led to a review of their social situation and duties; 'and will reflect that their large allotment of worldly advantages is for the aid and benefit of the whole.' Is it then from the fate of Juignie, Archbishop of Paris, or of the Cardinal de Rochefoucault, and of so many others, who gave their fortunes, and, I may say, their very beings to the poor, that the rich are to learn, that their 'fortunes are for the aid and benefit of the whole?' I say nothing of the liberal persons of great rank and property, lay and ecclesiastic, men and women, to whom we have had the honour and happiness of affording an asylum,—I pass by these, lest I should never have done, or lest I should omit some as deserving as any I might mention. Why will the author then suppose that the nobles and men of property in France have been banished, confiscated, and murdered, on account of the savageness and ferocity of their character, and their being tainted with vices beyond those of the same order and description in other countries? No judge of a revolutionary tribunal, with his hands dipped in their blood, and his maw gorged with their property, has yet dared to assert what this author has been pleased, by way of a moral lesson, to insinuate.

Their nobility, and their men of property, in a mass, had the very same virtues, and the very same vices, and in the very same proportions, with the same description of men in this and in other nations. I must do justice to suffering honour, generosity, and integrity. I do not know that any time, or any country, has furnished more splendid examples of every virtue, domestic and public. I do not enter into the councils of Providence: but, humanly speaking, many of these nobles and men of property, from whose disastrous fate we are, it seems, to learn a general softening of character, and a revision of our social situations and duties, appear to me full as little deserving of that fate, as the author, whoever he is, can be. Many of them, I am sure, were such as I should be proud

indeed to be able to compare myself with, in knowledge, in integrity, and in every other virtue. My feeble nature might shrink, though theirs did not, from the proof; but my reason and my ambition tell me that it would be a good bargain to purchase their merits with their fate.

For which of his vices did that great magistrate, D'Espréménil, lose his fortune and his head? What were the abominations of Malesherbes, that other excellent magistrate, whose sixty years of uniform virtue was acknowledged, in the very act of his murder, by the judicial butchers who condemned him? On account of what misdemeanours was he robbed of his property, and slaughtered with two generations of his offspring; and the remains of the third race, with a refinement of cruelty, and lest they should appear to reclaim the property forfeited by the virtues of their ancestor, confounded in a hospital with the thousands of those unhappy foundling infants, who are abandoned, without relation, and without name, by the wretchedness or by the profligacy of their parents?

Is the fate of the Queen of France to produce this softening of character? Was she a person so very ferocious and cruel as, by the example of her death, frighten us into common humanity? Is there no way to teach the emperor a softening of character, and a review of his social situation and duty, but his consent, by an infamous accord with regicide, to drive a second coach with the Austrian arms through the streets of Paris, along which, after a series of preparatory horrors, exceeding the atrocities of the bloody execution itself, the glory of the imperial race had been carried to an ignominious death? Is this a lesson of *moderation* to a descendant of Maria Theresa, drawn from the fate of the daughter of that incomparable woman and sovereign? If he learns this lesson from such an object, and from such teachers, the man may remain, but the king is deposed. If he does not carry quite another memory of that transaction in the inmost recesses of his heart, he is unworthy to reign;

he is unworthy to live. In the chronicle of disgrace he will have but this short tale told of him, 'he was the first emperor of his house that embraced a regicide: he was the last that wore the imperial purple.'—Far am I from thinking so ill of this august sovereign, who is at the head of the monarchies of Europe, and who is the trustee of their dignities and his own.

What ferocity of character drew on the fate of Elizabeth, the sister of King Louis XVI? For which of the vices of that pattern of benevolence, of piety, and of all the virtues, did they put her to death? For which of her vices did they put to death the mildest of all human creatures, the Duchess of Biron? What were the crimes of those crowds of matrons and virgins of condition, whom they massacred, with their juries of blood, in prisons, and on scaffolds? What were the enormities of the infant king, whom they caused, by lingering tortures, to perish in their dungeon, and whom, if at last they dispatched by poison, it was in that detestable crime the only act of mercy they have ever shown.

What softening of character is to be had, what review of their social situations and duties is to be taught by these examples, to kings, to nobles, to men of property, to women, and to infants? The royal family perished, because it was royal. The nobles perished, because they were noble. The men, women, and children, who had property, because they had property to be robbed of. The priests were punished, after they had been robbed of their all, not for their vices, but for their virtues and their piety, which made them an honour to their sacred profession, and to that nature of which we ought to be proud, since they belong to it. My lord, nothing can be learned from such examples, except the danger of being kings, queens, nobles, priests, and children, to be butchered on account of their inheritance. These are things, at which not vice, not crime, not folly, but wisdom, goodness, learning, justice, probity, beneficence, stand aghast. By these examples our reason and our moral

sense are not enlightened, but confounded; and there is no refuge for astonished and affrighted virtue, but being annihilated in humility and submission, sinking into a silent adoration of the inscrutable dispensations of Providence, and flying, with trembling wings, from this world of daring crimes, and feeble, pusillanimous, half-bred, bastard justice, to the asylum of another order of things, in an unknown form, but in a better life.

Whatever the politician, or preacher of September or of October may think of the matter, it is a most comfortless, disheartening, desolating example. Dreadful is the example of ruined innocence and virtue, and the completest triumph of the completest villainy, that ever vexed and disgraced mankind! The example is ruinous in every point of view, religious, moral, civil, political. It establishes that dreadful maxim of Machiavel, that in great affairs men are not to be wicked by halves. This maxim is not made for a middle sort of beings, who, because they cannot be angels, ought to thwart their ambition, and not endeavour to become infernal spirits. It is too well exemplified in the present time, where the faults and errors of humanity, checked by the imperfect timorous virtues, have been overpowered by those who have stopped at no crime. It is a dreadful part of the example, that infernal malevolence has had pious apologists, who read their lectures on frailties in favour of crimes: who abandon the weak, and court the friendship of the wicked. To root out these maxims, and the examples that support them, is a wise object of years of war. This is that war. This is that moral war. It was said by old Trivulzio that the battle of Marignan was the battle of the giants, that all the rest of the many he had seen were those of the cranes and pygmies. This is true of the objects, at least, of the contest. For the greater part of those, which we have hitherto contended for, in comparison, were the toys of children.

The October politician is so full of charity and good

nature, that he supposes that these very robbers and murderers themselves are in a course of melioration ; on what ground I cannot conceive, except on the long practice of every crime, and by its complete success. He is an Origenist, and believes in the conversion of the Devil. All that runs in the place of blood in his veins is nothing but the milk of human kindness. He is as soft as a curd, though, as a politician, he might be supposed to be made of sterner stuff. He supposes (to use his own expression) 'that the salutary truths, which he inculcates, are making their way into their bosoms.' Their bosom is a rock of granite, on which falsehood has long since built her stronghold. Poor truth has had a hard work of it with her little pickaxe. Nothing but gunpowder will do.

As a proof, however, of the progress of this sap of truth, he gives us a confession they had made not long before he wrote. 'Their fraternity' (as was lately stated by themselves in a solemn report) 'has been the brotherhood of Cain and Abel, and they have organized nothing but bankruptcy and famine.' A very honest confession truly ; and much in the spirit of their oracle, Rousseau. Yet, what is still more marvellous than the confession, this is the very fraternity to which our author gives us such an obliging invitation to accede. There is, indeed, a vacancy in the fraternal corps ; a brother and a partner is wanted. If we please, we may fill up the place of the butchered Abel ; and, whilst we wait the destiny of the departed brother, we may enjoy the advantages of the partnership, by entering, without delay, into a shop of ready-made bankruptcy and famine. These are the *douceurs* by which we are invited to regicide fraternity and friendship. But still our author considers the confession as a proof, that 'truth is making its way into their bosoms.' No! It is not making its way into their bosoms. It has forced its way into their mouths! The evil spirit, by which they are possessed, though essentially a liar, is forced by the tortures of conscience, to confess the truth ; to confess enough for their con-

demnation, but not for their amendment. Shakespeare very aptly expresses this kind of confession, devoid of repentance, from the mouth of an usurper, a murderer, and a regicide—

> . . 'We are ourselves compelled,
> Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
> To give in evidence.'

Whence is their amendment? Why, the author writes that, on their murderous insurrectionary system, their own lives are not sure for an hour; nor has their power a greater stability. True. They are convinced of it; and accordingly the wretches have done all they can to preserve their lives and to secure their power; but not one step have they taken to amend the one, or to make a more just use of the other. Their wicked policy has obliged them to make a pause in the only massacres, in which their treachery and cruelty had operated as a kind of savage justice, that is, the massacre of the accomplices of their crimes: they have ceased to shed the inhuman blood of their fellow-murderers; but when they take any of those persons, who contend for their lawful government, their property, and their religion, notwithstanding the truth which this author says is making its way into their bosoms, it has not taught them the least tincture of mercy. This we plainly see by their massacre at Quiberon, where they put to death, with every species of contumely, and without any exception, every prisoner of war who did not escape out of their hands. To have had property, to have been robbed of it, and to endeavour to regain it—these are crimes irremissible, to which every man, who regards his property, or his life, in every country, ought well to look in all connexion with those, with whom to have had property was an offence, to endeavour to keep it a second offence, to attempt to regain it a crime, that puts the offender out of all the laws of peace or war. You cannot see one of those wretches without an alarm for your life as well as your goods. They are like the worst of the

French and Italian banditti, who, whenever they robbed, were sure to murder.

Are they not the very same ruffians, thieves, assassins, and regicides, that they were from the beginning? Have they diversified the scene by the least variety, or produced the face of a single new villany? *Taedet harum quotidianarum formarum.* Oh! but I shall be answered, it is now quite another thing:—they are all changed:—you have not seen them in their state dresses:—this makes an amazing difference:—the new habit of the Directory is so charmingly fancied, that it is impossible not to fall in love with so well-dressed a constitution:—the *costume* of the sans-culotte constitution of 1793 was absolutely insufferable. The committee for foreign affairs were such slovens, and stunk so abominably, that no *muscadin* ambassador of the smallest degree of delicacy of nerves could come within ten yards of them:—but now they are so powdered and perfumed, and ribanded, and sashed and plumed, that, though they are grown infinitely more insolent in their fine clothes, even than they were in their rags (and that was enough), as they now appear, there is something in it more grand and noble, something more suitable to an awful Roman senate, receiving the homage of dependent tetrarchs. Like that senate (their perpetual model for conduct towards other nations) they permit their vassals (during their good pleasure) to assume the name of kings, in order to bestow more dignity on the suite and retinue of the sovereign republic by the nominal rank of their slaves—*Ut habeant instrumenta servitutis et reges.* All this is very fine, undoubtedly; and ambassadors, whose hands are almost out for want of employment, may long to have their part in this august ceremony of the republic one and indivisible. But, with great deference to the new diplomatic taste, we old people must retain some square-toed predilection for the fashions of our youth. I am afraid you will find me, my lord, again falling into my usual vanity, in valuing myself on the eminent men, whose society I once enjoyed. I remember, in

a conversation I once had with my ever dear friend Garrick, who was the first of actors, because he was the most acute observer of nature I ever knew, I asked him, how it happened that, whenever a senate appeared on the stage, the audience seemed always disposed to laughter ? He said the reason was plain ; the audience was well acquainted with the faces of most of the senators. They knew that they were no other than candle-snuffers, revolutionary scene-shifters, second and third mob, prompters, clerks, executioners, who stand with their axe on their shoulders by the wheel, grinners in the pantomime, murderers in tragedies, who made ugly faces under black wigs ; in short, the very scum and refuse of the theatre ; and it was of course that the contrast of the vileness of the actors with the pomp of their habits naturally excited ideas of contempt and ridicule.

So it was at Paris on the inaugural day of the constitution for the present year. The foreign ministers were ordered to attend at this investiture of the Directory ;—for so they call the managers of their burlesque government. The diplomacy, who were a sort of strangers, were quite awe-struck with 'the pride, pomp, and circumstance' of this majestic senate ; whilst the sans-culotte gallery instantly recognized their old insurrectionary acquaintance, burst out into a horse-laugh at their absurd finery, and held them in infinitely greater contempt, than whilst they prowled about the streets in the pantaloons of the last year's constitution, when their legislators appeared honestly, with their daggers in their belts, and their pistols peeping out of their side-pocket holes, like a bold brave banditti, as they are. The Parisians (and I am much of their mind) think that a thief, with a crape on his visage, is much worse than a barefaced knave ; and that such robbers richly deserve all the penalties of all the black acts. In this their thin disguise, their comrades of the late abdicated sovereign *canaille* hooted and hissed them ; and from that day have no other name for them than what is not quite so

easy to render into English, impossible to make it very civil English: it belongs, indeed, to the language of the *halles*; but, without being instructed in that dialect, it was the opinion of the polite Lord Chesterfield, that no man could be a complete master of French. Their Parisian brethren called them *gueux plumés*, which, though not elegant, is expressive and characteristic:—'*feathered scoundrels*,' I think, comes the nearest to it in that kind of English. But we are now to understand, that these *gueux*, for no other reason that I can divine, except their red and white clothes, form, at last, a state with which we may cultivate amity, and have a prospect of the blessings of a secure and permanent peace. In effect, then, it was not with the men, or their principles, or their politics, that we quarrelled. Our sole dislike was to the cut of their clothes.

But to pass over *their* dresses—good God! in what habits did the representatives of the crowned heads of Europe appear, when they came to swell the pomp of their humiliation, and attended in solemn function this inauguration of regicide? That would be the curiosity. Under what robes did they cover the disgrace and degradation of the whole college of kings? What warehouses of masks and dominoes furnished a cover to the nakedness of their shame? The shop ought to be known; it will soon have a good trade. Were the dresses of the ministers of those lately called potentates, who attended on that occasion, taken from the wardrobe of that property-man at the opera, from whence my old acquaintance *Anacharsis Clootz*, some years ago, equipped a body of ambassadors, whom he conducted, as from all the nations in the world, to the bar of what was called the Constituent Assembly? Among those mock ministers, one of the most conspicuous figures was the representative of the British nation, who unluckily was wanting at the late ceremony. In the face of all the real ambassadors of the sovereigns of Europe was this ludicrous representation of their several subjects, under the name of *oppressed*

sovereigns[1], exhibited to the assembly: that assembly received an harangue, in the name of those sovereigns, against their kings, delivered by this *Clootz*, actually a subject of Prussia, under the name of ambassador of the human race. At that time there was only a feeble reclamation from one of the ambassadors of these tyrants and oppressors. A most gracious answer was given to the ministers of the oppressed sovereigns; and they went so far on that occasion as to assign them, in that assumed character, a box at one of their festivals.

I was willing to indulge myself in a hope that this second appearance of ambassadors was only an insolent mummery of the same kind; but alas! Anacharsis himself, all fanatic as he was, could not have imagined, that his opera procession should have been the prototype of the real appearance of the representatives of all the sovereigns of Europe themselves, to make the same prostration that was made by those who dared to represent their people in a complaint against them. But in this the French republic has followed, as they always affect to do, and have hitherto done with success, the example of the ancient Romans, who shook all governments by listening to the complaints of their subjects, and soon after brought the kings themselves to answer at their bar. At this last ceremony the ambassadors had not Clootz for their Cotterel—pity, that Clootz had not had a reprieve from the guillotine till he had completed his work! But that engine fell before the curtain had fallen upon all the dignity of the earth.

On this their gaudy day the new regicide Directory sent for their diplomatic rabble, as bad as themselves in principle, but infinitely worse in degradation. They called them out by a sort of roll of their nations, one after another, much in the manner, in which they called wretches out of their prison to the guillotine. When

[1] *Souverains opprimés*—See the whole proceeding in the process verbal of the National Assembly.

these ambassadors of infamy appeared before them, the chief director, in the name of the rest, treated each of them with a short, affected, pedantic, insolent, theatric laconium: a sort of epigram of contempt. When they had thus insulted them in a style and language, which never before was heard, and which no sovereign would for a moment endure from another, supposing any of them frantic enough to use it, to finish their outrage, they drummed and trumpeted the wretches out of their hall of audience.

Among the objects of this insolent buffoonery was a person supposed to represent the King of Prussia. To this worthy representative they did not so much as condescend to mention his master; they did not seem to know that he had one; they addressed themselves solely to Prussia in the abstract, notwithstanding the infinite obligation they owed to their early protector for their first recognition and alliance, and for the part of his territory he gave into their hands for the first-fruits of his homage. None but dead monarchs are so much as mentioned by them, and those only to insult the living by an invidious comparison. They told the Prussians they ought to learn, after the example of Frederick the Great, a love for France. What a pity it is that he, who loved France so well as to chastise it, was not now alive, by an unsparing use of the rod (which indeed he would have spared little), to give them another instance of his paternal affection. But the Directory were mistaken. These are not days in which monarchs value themselves upon the title of *great*; they are grown *philosophic*: they are satisfied to be good.

Your lordship will pardon me for this no very long reflection on the short but excellent speech of the plumed director to the ambassador of Cappadocia. The imperial ambassador was not in waiting, but they found for Austria a good Judean representation. With great judgment his highness, the grand duke, had sent the most atheistic coxcomb to be found in Florence, to represent, at the bar of impiety, the house

of apostolic majesty, and the descendants of the pious, though high-minded, Maria Theresa. He was sent to humble the whole race of Austria before those grim assassins, reeking with the blood of the daughter of Maria Theresa, whom they sent half-dead, in a dung cart, to a cruel execution; and this true-born son of apostasy and infidelity, this renegado from the faith and from all honour and all humanity, drove an Austrian coach over the stones, which were yet wet with her blood;—with that blood, which dropped every step through her tumbrel, all the way she was drawn from the horrid prison, in which they had finished all the cruelty and horrors, not executed in the face of the sun! The Hungarian subjects of Maria Theresa, when they drew their swords to defend her rights against France, called her, with correctness of truth, though not with the same correctness, perhaps, of grammar, a king: *moriamur pro rege nostro Maria Theresa.*—SHE lived and died a king, and others will have subjects ready to make the same vow, when, in either sex, they show themselves real kings.

When the Directory came to this miserable fop, they bestowed a compliment on his matriculation into *their* philosophy; but as to his master, they made to him, as was reasonable, a reprimand, not without a pardon, and an oblique hint at the whole family. What indignities have been offered through this wretch to his master, and how well borne, it is not necessary that I should dwell on at present. I hope that those who yet wear royal, imperial, and ducal crowns, will learn to feel as men and as kings; if not, I predict to them, they will not long exist as kings or as men.

Great Britain was not there. Almost in despair, I hope she will never, in any rags and *coversluts* of infamy, be seen at such an exhibition. The hour of her final degradation is not yet come; she did not herself appear in the regicide presence, to be the sport and mockery of those bloody buffoons, who, in the merriment of their pride, were insulting, with every species of contumely, the fallen dignity of the rest of

Europe. But Britain, though not personally appearing to bear her part in this monstrous tragi-comedy, was very far from being forgotten. The new-robed regicides found a representative for her. And who was this representative? Without a previous knowledge, any one would have given a thousand guesses before he could arrive at a tolerable divination of their rancorous insolence. They chose to address what they had to say concerning this nation to the ambassador of America. They did not apply to this ambassador for a mediation:—that, indeed, would have indicated a want of every kind of decency; but it would have indicated nothing more. But in this their American apostrophe, your lordship will observe, they did not so much as pretend to hold out to us directly, or through any mediator, though in the most humiliating manner, any idea whatsoever of peace, or the smallest desire of reconciliation. To the states of America themselves they paid no compliment. They paid their compliment to Washington solely; and on what ground? This most respectable commander and magistrate might deserve commendation on very many of those qualities, which they, who most disapprove some part of his proceedings, not more justly than freely, attribute to him; but they found nothing to commend in him '*but the hatred he bore to Great Britain.*' I verily believe that, in the whole history of our European wars, there never was such a compliment paid from the sovereign of one state to a great chief of another. Not one ambassador from any one of those powers who pretend to live in amity with this kingdom, took the least notice of that unheard-of declaration; nor will Great Britain, till she is known with certainty to be true to her own dignity, find any one disposed to feel for the indignities that are offered to her. To say the truth, those miserable creatures were all silent under the insults that were offered to themselves. They pocketed their epigrams, as ambassadors formerly took the gold boxes and miniature pictures set in diamonds, presented them by sovereigns

at whose courts they had resided. It is to be presumed that by the next post they faithfully and promptly transmitted to their masters the honours they had received. I can easily conceive the epigram which will be presented to Lord Auckland, or to the Duke of Bedford, as hereafter, according to circumstances, they may happen to represent this kingdom. Few can have so little imagination, as not readily to conceive the nature of the boxes of epigrammatic lozenges that will be presented to them.

But *hae nugae seria ducunt in mala*. The conduct of the regicide faction is perfectly systematic in every particular, and it appears absurd only as it is strange and uncouth; not as it has an application to the ends and objects of their policy. When by insult after insult they have rendered the character of sovereigns vile in the eyes of their subjects, they know there is but one step more to their utter destruction. All authority, in a great degree, exists in opinion: royal authority most of all. The supreme majesty of a monarch cannot be allied with contempt. Men would reason not unplausibly that it would be better to get rid of the monarchy at once, than to suffer that which was instituted, and well instituted, to support the glory of the nation, to become the instrument of its degradation and disgrace. A good many reflections will arise in your lordship's mind upon the time and circumstances of that most insulting and atrocious declaration of hostility against this kingdom. The declaration was made subsequent to the noble lord's encomium on the new regicide constitution; after the pamphlet had made something more than advances towards a reconciliation with that ungracious race and had directly disowned all those who adhered to the original declaration in favour of monarchy. It was even subsequent to the unfortunate declaration in the speech from the throne (which this pamphlet but too truly announced) of the readiness of our government to enter into connexions of friendship with that faction. Here was the answer, from the throne of regicide, to the speech from

the throne of Great Britain. They got out of their way to compliment General Washington on the supposed rancour of his heart towards this country. It is very remarkable that they make this compliment of malice to the chief of the United States, who had first signed a treaty of peace, amity, and commerce with this kingdom. This radical hatred, according to their way of thinking, the most recent, solemn compacts of friendship cannot or ought not to remove. In this malice to England, as in the one great comprehensive virtue, all other merits of this illustrious person are entirely merged.—For my part, I do not believe the fact to be so, as they represent it. Certainly it is not for Mr. Washington's honour as a gentleman, a Christian, or a president of the United States, after the treaty he has signed, to entertain such sentiments. I have a moral assurance that the representation of the regicide Directory is absolutely false and groundless. If it be, it is a stronger mark of their audacity and insolence, and still a stronger proof of the support they mean to give to the mischievous faction they are known to nourish there, to the ruin of those states, and to the end that no British affections should ever arise in that important part of the world, which would naturally lead to a cordial, hearty British alliance, upon the bottom of mutual interest and ancient affection. It shows in what part it is, and with what a weapon, they mean a deadly blow at the heart of Great Britain. One really would have expected, from this new constitution of theirs, which had been announced as a great reform, and which was to be, more than any of their former experimental schemes, alliable with other nations, that they would, in their very first public act, and their declaration to the collected representation of Europe and America, have affected some degree of moderation, or, at least, have observed a guarded silence with regard to their temper and their views. No such thing; they were in haste to declare the principles which are spun into the primitive staple of their frame. They were afraid that a moment's

doubt should exist about them. In their very infancy they were in haste to put their hand on their infernal altar, and to swear the same immortal hatred to England, which was sworn in the succession of all the short-lived constitutions that preceded it. With them everything else perishes, almost as soon as it is formed; this hatred alone is immortal. This is their impure vestal fire, that never is extinguished; and never will it be extinguished whilst the system of regicide exists in France. What! are we not to believe them? Men are too apt to be deceitful enough in their professions of friendship, and this makes a wise man walk with some caution through life. Such professions in some cases may be even a ground of further distrust. But when a man declares himself your unalterable enemy! No man ever declared to another a rancour towards him, which he did not feel. *Falsos in amore odia non fingere,* said an author who points his observations so as to make them remembered.

Observe, my lord, that, from their invasion of Flanders and Holland to this hour, they have never made the smallest signification of a desire of peace with this kingdom, with Austria, or, indeed, with any other power, that I know of. As superiors, they expect others to begin. We have complied, as you may see. The hostile insolence with which they gave such a rebuff to our first overture in the speech from the throne, did not hinder us from making, from the same throne, a second advance. The two Houses, a second time, coincided in the same sentiments with a degree of apparent unanimity (for there was no dissentient voice but yours), with which, when they reflect on it, they will be as much ashamed, as I am. To this our new humiliating overture (such, at whatever hazard, I must call it) what did the regicide Director answer? Not one public word of a readiness to treat. No, they feel their proud situation too well. They never declared whether they would grant peace to you or not. They only signified to you their pleasure as to the terms on which alone they would, in any case,

admit you to it. You showed your general disposition to peace, and, to forward it, you left everything open to negotiations. As to any terms you can possibly obtain, they shut out all negotiation at the very commencement. They declared that they never would make a peace, by which anything, that ever belonged to France, should be ceded. We would not treat with the monarchy, weakened as it must obviously be in any circumstance of restoration, without a reservation of something for indemnity and security, and that too in words of the largest comprehension. You treat with the regicides, without any reservation at all. On their part, they assure you formally and publicly that they will give you nothing in the name of indemnity or security, or for any other purpose.

It is impossible not to pause here for a moment, and to consider the manner in which such declarations would have been taken by your ancestors from a monarch distinguished for his arrogance; an arrogance, which, even more than his ambition, incensed and combined all Europe against him. Whatever his inward intentions may have been, did Louis XIV ever make a declaration that the true bounds of France were the ocean, the Mediterranean and the Rhine? In any overtures for peace, did he ever declare that he would make no sacrifices to promote it? His declarations were always directly to the contrary; and at the peace of Ryswick his actions were to the contrary. At the close of the war, almost in every instance victorious, all Europe were astonished, even those who received them were astonished, at his concessions. Let those, who have a mind to see how little in comparison the most powerful and ambitious of all monarchs is to be dreaded, consult the very judicious critical observations on the politics of that reign, inserted in the military treatise of the Marquis de Montalembert. Let those who wish to know what is to be dreaded from an ambitious republic, consult no author, no military critic, no historical critic. Let them open their own eyes, which degeneracy and

pusillanimity have shut from the light that pains them, and let them not vainly seek their security in a voluntary ignorance of their danger.

To dispose us towards this peace,—an attempt in which our author has, I do not know whether to call it the good or ill fortune to agree with whatever is most seditious, factious, and treasonable in this country, we are told by many dealers in speculation, but not so distinctly by the author himself, (too great distinctness of affirmation not being his fault,)—but we are told that the French have lately obtained a very pretty sort of constitution, and that it resembles the British constitution as if they had been twinned together in the womb—*mirè sagaces falleret hospites discrimen obscurum.* It may be so; but I confess I am not yet made to it; nor is the noble author. He finds the 'elements' excellent; but the disposition very inartificial indeed. Contrary to what we might expect at Paris—the meat is good, the cookery abominable. I agree with him fully in the last; and if I were forced to allow the first, I should still think, with our old coarse byword—that the same power, which furnished all their former *restaurateurs*, sent also their present cooks. I have a great opinion of Thomas Paine, and of all his productions; I remember his having been one of the committee for forming one of their annual constitutions; I mean the admirable constitution of 1793, after having been a chamber counsel to the no less admirable constitution of 1791. This pious patriot has his eyes still directed to his dear native country, notwithstanding her ingratitude to so kind a benefactor. This outlaw of England, and lawgiver to France, is now, in secret probably, trying his hand again; and inviting us to him by making his constitution such, as may give his disciples in England some plausible pretext for going into the house that he has opened. We have discovered, it seems, that all which the boasted wisdom of our ancestors has laboured to bring to perfection for six or seven centuries, is nearly, or altogether, matched in six or seven days, at the

leisure hours and sober intervals of citizen Thomas Paine.

'But though the treach'rous tapster Thomas,
Hangs a new Angel two doors from us,
As fine as daubers' hands can make it,
In hopes that strangers may mistake it,
We think it both a shame and sin
To quit the good old Angel Inn.'

Indeed, in this good old house, where everything, at least, is well aired, I shall be content to put up my fatigued horses, and here take a bed for the long night that begins to darken upon me. Had I, however, the honour (I must now call it so) of being a member of any of the constitutional clubs, I should think I had carried my point most completely. It is clear, by the applauses bestowed on what the author calls this new constitution, a mixed oligarchy, that the difference between the clubbists and the old adherents to the monarchy of this country is hardly worth a scuffle. Let it depart in peace, and light lie the earth on the British constitution! By this easy manner of treating the most difficult of all subjects, the constitution for a great kingdom, and by letting loose an opinion that they may be made by any adventurers in speculation in a small given time, and for any country, all the ties which, whether of reason or prejudice, attach mankind to their old, habitual, domestic governments, are not a little loosened: all communion, which the similarity of the basis has produced between all the governments that compose what we call the Christian world, and the republic of Europe, would be dissolved. By these hazarded speculations France is more approximated to us in constitution than in situation; and in proportion as we recede from the ancient system of Europe, we approach to that connexion, which alone can remain to us, a close alliance with the new-discovered moral and political world in France.

These theories would be of little importance, if we did not only know, but sorely feel, that there is a strong

Jacobin faction in this country, which has long employed itself in speculating upon constitutions, and to whom the circumstance of their government being home-bred and prescriptive seems no sort of recommendation. What seemed to us to be the best system of liberty that a nation ever enjoyed, to them seems the yoke of an intolerable slavery. This speculative faction had long been at work. The French revolution did not cause it: it only discovered it, increased it, and gave fresh vigour to its operations. I have reason to be persuaded that it was in this country, and from English writers and English caballers, that France herself was instituted in this revolutionary fury. The communion of these two factions upon any pretended basis of similarity is a matter of very serious consideration. They are always considering the formal distributions of power in a constitution: the moral basis they consider as nothing. Very different is my opinion: I consider the moral basis as everything; the formal arrangements, further than as they promote the moral principles of government, and the keeping desperately wicked persons as the subjects of laws and not the makers of them, to be of little importance. What signifies the cutting and shuffling of cards, while the pack still remains the same? As a basis for such a connexion as has subsisted between the powers of Europe, we had nothing to fear, but from the lapses and frailties of men, and that was enough; but this new pretended republic has given us more to apprehend from what they call their virtues, than we had to dread from the vices of other men. Avowedly and systematically they have given the upper hand to all the vicious and degenerate part of human nature. It is from their lapses and deviations from their principle, that alone we have anything to hope.

I hear another inducement to fraternity with the present rulers. They have murdered one Robespierre. This Robespierre they tell us was a cruel tyrant, and now that he is put out of the way, all will go well in

France. Astraea will again return to that earth, from which she has been an emigrant, and all nations will resort to her golden scales. It is very extraordinary that the very instant the mode of Paris is known here, it becomes all the fashion in London. This is their jargon. It is the old *bon ton* of robbers, who cast their common crimes on the wickedness of their departed associates. I care little about the memory of this same Robespierre. I am sure he was an execrable villain. I rejoiced at his punishment neither more nor less than I should at the execution of the present Directory, or any of its members. But who gave Robespierre the power of being a tyrant ? and who were the instruments of tyranny ? The present virtuous constitution-mongers. He was a tyrant, they were his satellites and his hangmen. Their sole merit is in the murder of their colleague. They have expiated their other murders by a new murder. It has always been the case among the banditti. They have always had the knife at each other's throats, after they had almost blunted it at the throats of every honest man. These people thought that, in the commerce of murder, he was like to have the better of the bargain, if any time was lost ; they, therefore, took one of their short revolutionary methods, and massacred him in a manner so perfidious and cruel, as would shock all humanity, if the stroke was not struck by the present rulers on one of their own associates. But this last act of infidelity and murder is to expiate all the rest, and to qualify them for the amity of a humane and virtuous sovereign and civilized people. I have heard that a Tartar believes, when he has killed a man, that all his estimable qualities pass with his clothes and arms to the murderer ; but I have never heard, that it was the opinion of any savage Scythian that, if he kills a brother villain, he is, *ipso facto*, absolved of all his own offences. The Tartarian doctrine is the most tenable opinion. The murderers of Robespierre, besides what they are entitled to by being engaged in the same tontine of infamy, are his representatives, have

inherited all his murderous qualities, in addition to their own private stock. But it seems, we are always to be of a party with the last and victorious assassins. I confess I am of a different mind; and am rather inclined, of the two, to think and speak less hardly of a dead ruffian, than to associate with the living. I could better bear the stench of the gibbeted murderer, than the society of the bloody felons who yet annoy the world. Whilst they wait the recompense due to their ancient crimes, they merit new punishment by the new offences they commit. There is a period to the offences of Robespierre. They survive in his assassins. Better a living dog, says the old proverb, than a dead lion; not so here. Murderers and hogs never look well till they are hanged. From villany no good can arise, but in the example of its fate. So I leave them their dead Robespierre, either to gibbet his memory, or to deify him in their Pantheon with their Marat and their Mirabeau.

It is asserted that this government promises stability; God of his mercy forbid! If it should, nothing upon earth besides itself can be stable. We declare this stability to be the ground of our making peace with them. Assuming it, therefore, that the men and the system are what I have described, and that they have a determined hostility against this country, an hostility not only of policy but of predilection; then I think that every rational being would go along with me in considering its permanence as the greatest of all possible evils. If, therefore, we are to look for peace with such a thing in any of its monstrous shapes, which I deprecate, it must be in that state of disorder, confusion, discord, anarchy, and insurrection, such as might oblige the momentary rulers to forbear their attempts on neighbouring states, or to render these attempts less operative, if they should kindle new wars. When was it heard before that the internal repose of a determined and wicked enemy, and the strength of his government, became the wish of his neighbour, and a security against either his malice or his ambition? The direct contrary

has always been inferred from that state of things; accordingly, it has ever been the policy of those who would preserve themselves against the enterprises of such a malignant and mischievous power, to cut out so much work for him in his own states, as might keep his dangerous activity employed at home.

It is said, in vindication of this system, which demands the stability of the regicide power as a ground for peace with them, that when they have obtained, as now, it is said (though not by this noble author), they have, a permanent government, they will be *able* to preserve amity with this kingdom, and with others, who have the misfortune to be in their neighbourhood. Granted. They will be *able* to do so, without question; but are they willing to do so? Produce the act, produce the declaration. Have they made any single step towards it? Have they ever once proposed to treat?

The assurance of a stable peace, grounded on the stability of their system, proceeds on this hypothesis, that their hostility to other nations has proceeded from their anarchy at home, and from the prevalence of a populace, which their government had not strength enough to master. This I utterly deny. I insist upon it as a fact, that in the daring commencement of all their hostilities, and their astonishing perseverance in them, so as never once in any fortune, high or low, to propose a treaty of peace to any power in Europe, they have never been actuated by the people: on the contrary the people, I will not say have been moved, but impelled by them, and have generally acted under a compulsion, of which most of us are, as yet, thank God, unable to form an adequate idea. The war against Austria was formally declared by the unhappy Louis XVI; but who has ever considered Louis XVI, since the revolution, to have been the government? The second regicide assembly, then the only government, was the author of that war, and neither the nominal king, nor the nominal people, had anything to do with it, further than in a reluctant obedience.

It is to delude ourselves to consider the state of France, since their revolution, as a state of anarchy: it is something far worse. Anarchy it is, undoubtedly, if compared with government pursuing the peace, order, morals, and prosperity of the people. But regarding only the power that has really guided from the day of the revolution to this time, it has been of all governments the most absolute, despotic, and effective, that has hitherto appeared on earth. Never were the views and politics of any government pursued with half the regularity, system, and method, that a diligent observer must have contemplated with amazement and terror in theirs. Their state is not an anarchy, but a series of short-lived tyrannies. We do not call a republic with annual magistrates an anarchy: theirs is that kind of republic; but the succession is not effected by the expiration of the term of the magistrate's service, but by his murder. Every new magistracy, succeeding by homicide, is auspicated by accusing its predecessors in the office of tyranny, and it continues by the exercise of what they charged upon others.

This strong hand is the law, and the sole law, in their state. I defy any person to show any other law, or if any such should be found on paper, that it is in the smallest degree, or in any one instance, regarded or practised. In all their successions, not one magistrate, or one form of magistracy, has expired by a mere, occasional, popular tumult; everything has been the effect of the studied machinations of the one revolutionary cabal, operating within itself upon itself. That cabal is all in all. France has no public; it is the only nation I ever heard of, where the people are absolutely slaves, in the fullest sense, in all affairs, public and private, great and small, even down to the minutest and most recondite parts of their household concerns. The helots of Laconia, the regardants of the manor in Russia and in Poland, even the negroes in the West Indies, know nothing of so searching, so penetrating, so heart-breaking a slavery. Much would these servile wretches call for our pity under that

unheard-of yoke, if for their prefidious and unnatural rebellion, and for their murder of the mildest of all monarchs, they did not richly deserve a punishment not greater than their crime.

On the whole, therefore, I take it to be a great mistake to think that the want of power in the government furnished a natural cause of war; whereas the greatness of its power, joined to its use of that power, the nature of its system, and the persons, who acted in it, did naturally call for a strong military resistance to oppose them, and rendered it not only just, but necessary. But, at present, I say no more on the genius and character of the power set up in France. I may probably trouble you with it more at large hereafter: this subject calls for a very full exposure; at present, it is enough for me, if I point it out as a matter well worthy of consideration, whether the true ground of hostility was not rightly conceived very early in this war, and whether anything has happened to change that system, except our ill success in a war, which, in no principal instance, had its true destination as the object of its operations. That the war has succeeded ill in many cases is undoubted; but, then, let us speak the truth, and say we are defeated, exhausted, dispirited, and must submit. This would be intelligible. The world would be inclined to pardon the abject conduct of an undone nation. But let us not conceal from *ourselves* our real situation, whilst, by every species of humiliation, we are but too strongly displaying our sense of it to the enemy.

The writer of the Remarks in the last week of October appears to think that the present government in France contains many of the elements, which, when properly arranged, are known to form the best practical governments; and that the system, whatever may become its particular form, is no longer likely to be an obstacle to negotiation. If its form now be no obstacle to such negotiation, I do not know why it was ever so. Suppose that this government promised greater permanency than any of the former (a point on which I can form

no judgment), still a link is wanting to couple the permanence of the government with the permanence of the peace. On this not one word is said: nor can there be, in my opinion. This deficiency is made up by strengthening the first ringlet of the chain, that ought to be, but that is not, stretched to connect the two propositions. All seems to be done, if we can make out, that the last French edition of regicide is like to prove stable.

As a prognostic of this stability, it is said to be accepted by the people. Here again I join issue with the fraternizers, and positively deny the fact. Some submission or other has been obtained, by some means or other, to every government; that hitherto has been set up. And the same submission would, by the same means, be obtained for any other project, that the wit or folly of man could possibly devise. The constitution of 1790 was universally received. The constitution which followed it, under the name of a convention, was universally submitted to. The constitution of 1793 was universally accepted. Unluckily, this year's constitution, which was formed, and its *genethliacon* sung by the noble author while it was yet in embryo, or was but just come bloody from the womb, is the only one, which, in its very formation, has been generally resisted by a very great and powerful party in many parts of the kingdom, and particularly in the capital. It never had a popular choice even in show; those who arbitrarily erected the new building out of the old materials of their own convention, were obliged to send for an army to support their work: like brave gladiators, they fought it out in the streets of Paris, and even massacred each other in their house of assembly, in the most edifying manner, and for the entertainment and instruction of their excellencies the foreign ambassadors, who had a box in this constitutional amphitheatre of a free people.

At length, after a terrible struggle, the troops prevailed over the citizens. The citizen soldiers, the ever-famed national guards, who had deposed and murdered

their sovereign, were disarmed by the inferior trumpeters of that rebellion. Twenty thousand regular troops garrison Paris. Thus a complete military government is formed. It has the strength, and it may count on the stability, of that kind of power. This power is to last as long as the Parisians think proper. Every other ground of stability, but from military force and terror, is clean out of the question. To secure them further, they have a strong corps of irregulars, ready armed. Thousands of those hell-hounds called Terrorists, whom they had shut up in prison, on their last revolution, as the satellites of tyranny, are let loose on the people. The whole of their government, in its origination, in its continuance, in all its actions, and in all its resources, is force; and nothing but force; A forced constitution, a forced election, a forced subsistence, a forced requisition of soldiers, a forced loan of money.

They differ nothing from all the preceding usurpations, but that to the same odium a good deal more of contempt is added. In this situation, notwithstanding all their military force, strengthened with the undisciplined power of the Terrorists, and the nearly general disarming of Paris, there would almost certainly have been, before this, an insurrection against them, but for one cause. The people of France languish for peace. They all despaired of obtaining it from the coalesced powers, whilst they had a gang of professed regicides at their head; and several of the least desperate republicans would have joined with better men to shake them wholly off, and to produce something more ostensible, if they had not been reiteratedly told that their sole hope of peace was the very contrary to what they naturally imagined; that they must leave off their cabals and insurrections, which could serve no purpose but to bring in that royalty which was wholly rejected by the coalesced kings; that, to satisfy them, they must tranquilly, if they could not cordially, submit themselves to the tyranny and the tyrants they despised and abhorred. Peace was held out, by the

allied monarchies, to the people of France, as a bounty for supporting the republics of regicides. In fact, a coalition, begun for the avowed purpose of destroying that den of robbers, now exists only for their support. If evil happens to the princes of Europe from the success and stability of this infernal business, it is their own absolute crime.

We are to understand, however (for sometimes so the author hints), that something stable in the constitution of regicide was required for our amity with it; but the noble remarker is no more solicitous about this point, than he is for the permanence of the whole body of his October speculations: 'if,' says he, speaking of the regicide, 'they can obtain a practicable constitution, even for a limited period of time, they will be in a condition to re-establish the accustomed relations of peace and amity.' Pray let us leave this bush fighting. What is meant by *a limited period of time?* Does it mean the direct contrary to the terms, an unlimited period? If it is a limited period, what limitation does he fix as a ground for his opinion? Otherwise, his limitation is unlimited. If he only requires a constitution that will last while the treaty goes on, ten days' existence will satisfy his demands. He knows that France never did want a practicable constitution nor a government, which endured for a limited period of time. Her constitutions were but too practicable; and short as was their duration, it was but too long. They endured time enough for treaties, which benefited themselves, and have done infinite mischief to our cause. But, granting him his strange thesis, that hitherto the mere form or the mere term of their constitutions, and not their indisposition, but their instability, has been the cause of their not preserving the relations of amity; how could a constitution, which might not last half an hour after the noble lord's signature of the treaty in the company, in which he must sign it, ensure its observance? If you trouble yourself at all with their constitutions, you are certainly more concerned with them after the treaty, than before it, as the

observance of conventions is of infinitely more consequence than the making them. Can anything be more palpably absurd and senseless than to object to a treaty of peace, for want of durability in constitutions which had an actual duration, and to trust a constitution that at the time of the writing had not so much as a practical existence? There is no way of accounting for such discourse in the mouths of men of sense, but by supposing that they secretly entertain a hope that the very act of having made a peace with the regicides will give a stability to the regicide system. This will not clear the discourse from the absurdity, but it will account for the conduct, which such reasoning so ill defends. What a roundabout way is this to peace; to make war for the destruction of regicides, and then to give them peace in order to ensure a stability, that will enable them to observe it. I say nothing of the honour displayed in such a system. It is plain it militates with itself almost in all the parts of it. In one part, it supposes stability in their constitution, as a ground of a stable peace; in another part, we are to hope for peace in a different way; that is, by splitting this brilliant orb into little stars, and this would make the face of heaven so fine. No, there is no system upon which the peace, which in humility we are to supplicate, can possibly stand.

I believe, before this time, that the mere form of a constitution, in any country, never was fixed as the sole ground of objecting to a treaty with it. With other circumstances it may be of great moment. What is incumbent on the asserters of the fourth week of the October system to prove is, not whether their then expected constitution was likely to be stable or transitory, but whether it promised to this country and its allies, and to the peace and settlement of all Europe, more good will, or more good faith, than any of the experiments, which have gone before it. On these points I would willingly join issue.

Observe first the manner in which the remarker describes (very truly as I conceive) the people of

France under that auspicious government, and then observe the conduct of that government to other nations. 'The people without *any* established constitution; distracted by popular convulsions; in a state of inevitable bankruptcy; without any commerce; with their principal ports blockaded; and without a fleet that could venture to face one of our *detached squadrons.*' Admitting, as fully as he has stated it, this condition of France, I would fain know how he reconciles this condition with his ideas of *any kind of a practicable constitution,* or *duration for a limited period,* which are his *sine qua non* of peace. But, passing by contradictions, as no fair objections to reasoning, this state of things would naturally, at other times, and in other governments, have produced a disposition to peace, almost on any terms. But, in that state of their country, did the regicide government solicit peace or amity with other nations, or even lay any specious grounds for it, in propositions of affected moderation, or in the most loose and general conciliatory language? The direct contrary. It was but a very few days before the noble writer had commenced his remarks, as if it were to refute him by anticipation, that his France thought fit to lay out a new territorial map of dominion, and to declare to us and to all Europe what territories she was willing to allot to her own empire, and what she is content (during her good pleasure) to leave to others.

This their law of empire was promulgated without any requisition on that subject, and proclaimed in a style, and upon principles, which never had been heard of in the annals of arrogance and ambition. She prescribed the limits to her empire, not upon principles of treaty, convention, possession, usage, habitude, the distinction of tribes, nations, or languages, but by physical aptitudes. Having fixed herself as the arbiter of physical dominion, she construed the limits of nature by her convenience. That was nature, which most extended and best secured the empire of France.

I need say no more on the insult offered not only to

all equity and justice, but to the common sense of mankind, in deciding legal property by physical principles, and establishing the convenience of a party as a rule of public law. The noble advocate of peace has, indeed, perfectly well exploded this daring and outrageous system of pride and tyranny. I am most happy in commending him when he writes like himself. But hear still further, and in the same good strain, the great patron and advocate of amity with this accommodating, mild, and unassuming power, when he reports to you the law they give, and its immediate effects:—'They amount,' says he, 'to the sacrifice of powers, that have been the most nearly connected with us: the direct, or indirect, annexation to France of all the parts of the Continent, from Dunkirk to Hamburg; an immense accession of territory; and, in one word, THE ABANDONMENT OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF EUROPE!' This is the LAW (the author and I use no different terms), which this new government, almost as soon as it could cry in the cradle, and as one of the very first acts by which it auspicated its entrance into function; the pledge it gives of the firmness of its policy; such is the law that this proud power prescribes to abject nations. What is the comment upon this law by the great jurist, who recommends us to the tribunal which issued the decree? 'An obedience to it would be' (says he) 'dishonourable to us, and exhibit us to the present age and to posterity as submitting to the law prescribed to us by our enemy.'

Here I recognize the voice of a British plenipotentiary: I begin to feel proud of my country. But, alas! the short date of human elevation! The accents of dignity died upon his tongue. This author will not assure us of his sentiments for the whole of a pamphlet; but in the sole energetic part of it, he does not continue the same through a whole sentence, if it happens to be of any sweep or compass. In the very womb of this last sentence, pregnant, as it should seem, with a Hercules, there is formed a little bantling of the mortal race, a degenerate, puny parenthesis, that

totally frustrates our most sanguine views and expectations, and disgraces the whole gestation. Here is this destructive parenthesis, 'unless some adequate compensation be secured *to us*'—*To us!* The Christian world may shift for itself, Europe may groan in slavery, we may be dishonoured by receiving law from an enemy, but all is well, provided the compensation *to us* be adequate. To what are we reserved? An *adequate* compensation 'for the sacrifice of powers the most nearly connected with us;'—an *adequate* compensation 'for the direct or indirect annexation to France of all the ports of the Continent, from Dunkirk to Hamburg;'—an *adequate* compensation 'for the abandonment of the independence of Europe!' Would that when all our manly sentiments are thus changed, our manly language were changed along with them; and that the English tongue were not employed to utter what our ancestors never dreamed could enter into an English heart!

But let us consider this matter of adequate compensation.—Who is to furnish it? From what funds is it to be drawn? Is it by another treaty of commerce? I have no objections to treaties of commerce, upon principles of commerce—traffic for traffic;—all is fair. But commerce, in exchange for empire, for safety, for glory! We set out in our dealing with a miserable cheat upon ourselves. I know it may be said, that we may prevail on this proud, philosophical, military republic, which looks down with contempt on trade, to declare it unfit for the sovereign of nations to be *eundem negotiatorem et dominum*; that, in virtue of this maxim of her state, the English in France may be permitted, as the Jews are in Poland and in Turkey, to execute all the little inglorious occupations; to be the sellers of new, and the buyers of old clothes; to be their brokers and factors, and to be employed in casting up their debits and credits, whilst the master republic cultivates the arts of empire, prescribes the forms of peace to nations, and dictates laws to a subjected world. But are we quite sure that, when we have

surrendered half Europe to them in hope of this compensation, the republic will confer upon us those privileges of dishonour? Are we quite certain that she will permit us to farm the guillotine; to contract for the provision of her twenty thousand Bastiles? to furnish transports for the myriads of her exiles to Guiana; to become commissioners for her naval stores, or to engage for the clothing of those armies, which are to subdue the poor relics of Christian Europe? No! She is bespoke by the Jew subjects of her own Amsterdam for all these services,

But if these, or matters similar, are not the compensations the remarker demands, and that, on consideration, he finds them neither adequate nor certain, who else is to be the chapman, and to furnish the purchase-money, at this market, of all the grand principles of empire, of law, of civilization, of morals, and of religion; where British faith and honour are to be sold by inch of candle? Who is to be the *dedecorum pretiosus emptor*? Is it the *navis Hispanae magister*? Is it to be furnished by the Prince of Peace? Unquestionably. Spain as yet possesses mines of gold and silver; and may give us in *pesos duros* an adequate compensation for our honour and our virtue. When these things are at all to be sold, they are the vilest commodities at market.

It is full as singular as any of the other singularities in this work, that the remarker, talking so much as he does of cessions and compensations, passes by Spain in his general settlement, as if there were no such country on the globe: as if there were no Spain in Europe, no Spain in America. But this great matter of political deliberation cannot be put out of our thoughts by his silence. She *has* furnished compensations;—not to you but to France. The regicide republic and the still nominally subsisting monarchy of Spain are united, and are united upon a principle of jealousy, if not of bitter enmity, to Great Britain. The noble writer has here another matter for meditation. It is not from Dunkirk to Hamburg that the

ports are in the hands of France: they are in the hands of France from Hamburg to Gibraltar. How long the new dominion will last, I cannot tell; but France the republic has conquered Spain and the ruling party in that court acts by her orders, and exists by her power.

The noble writer, in his views into futurity, has forgotten to look back into the past. If he chooses it, he may recollect, that on the prospect of the death of Philip IV, and still more on the event, all Europe was moved to its foundations. In the treaties of partition that were first entered into, and in the war that afterwards blazed out to prevent those crowns from being actually, or virtually, united in the house of Bourbon, the predominance of France in Spain, and above all, in the Spanish Indies, was the great object of all those movements in the cabinet and in the field. The grand alliance was formed upon that apprehension.—On that apprehension the mighty war was continued during such a number of years, as the degenerate and pusillanimous impatience of our dwindled race can hardly bear to have reckoned:—a war equal, within a few years in duration, and not, perhaps, inferior in bloodshed, to any of those great contests for empire, which in history make the most awful matter of recorded memory.

> Ad confligendum venientibus undique Poenis,
> Omnia cum belli trepido concussa tumultu
> Horrida contremuere sub altis aetheris auris,
> In dubioque fuit sub utrorum regna cadendum
> Omnibus humanis esset terrâque marique.—

When this war was ended (I cannot stay now to examine how), the object of the war was the object of the treaty. When it was found impracticable, or less desirable than before, wholly to exclude a branch of the Bourbon race from that immense succession, the point of Utrecht was to prevent the mischief to arise from the influence of the greater upon the lesser branch. His lordship is a great member of the diplo-

matic body; he has, of course, all the fundamental treaties, which make the public statute law of Europe, by heart: and, indeed, no active member of parliament ought to be ignorant of their general tenor and leading provisions. In the treaty which closed that war, and of which it is a fundamental part, because relating to the whole policy of the compact, it was agreed that Spain should not give anything from her territory in the West Indies to France. This article, apparently onerous to Spain, was in truth highly beneficial. But, O the blindness of the greatest statesmen to the infinite and unlooked-for combinations of things, which lie hid in the dark prolific womb of futurity! The great trunk of Bourbon is cut down; the withered branch is worked up into the construction of a French regicide republic. Here we have formed, a new unlooked-for, monstrous, heterogeneous alliance; a double-natured monster; republic above, and monarch below. There is no centaur of fiction, no poetic satyr of the woods: nothing short of the hieroglyphic monsters of Egypt, dog in head, and man in body, that can give an idea of it. None of these things can subsist in nature (so at least it is thought); but the moral world admits monsters which the physical rejects.

In this metamorphosis, the first thing done by Spain, in the honeymoon of her new servitude, was, with all the hardihood of pusillanimity, utterly to defy the most solemn treaties with Great Britain and the guarantee of Europe. She has yielded the largest and fairest part of one of the largest and fairest islands in the West Indies, perhaps on the globe, to the usurped powers of France. She completes the title of those powers to the whole of that important central island of Hispaniola. She has solemnly surrendered to the regicides and butchers of the Bourbon family, what that court never ventured, perhaps never wished, to bestow on the patriarchal stock of her own august house.

The noble negotiator takes no notice of this portentous junction, and this audacious surrender. The

effect is no less than the total subversion of the balance of power in the West Indies, and indeed everywhere else. This arrangement, considered in itself, but much more as it indicates a complete union of France with Spain, is truly alarming. Does he feel nothing of the change this makes in that part of his description of the state of France, where he supposes her not able to face one of our detached squadrons? Does he feel nothing for the condition of Portugal under this new coalition? Is it for this state of things he recommends our junction in that common alliance as a remedy? It is surely already monstrous enough. We see every standing principle of policy, every old governing opinion of nations, completely gone; and with it the foundation of all their establishments. Can Spain keep herself internally where she is, with this connexion? Does he dream that Spain, unchristian, or even uncatholic, can exist as a monarchy? This author indulges himself in speculations of the division of the French republic. I only say that with much greater reason he might speculate on the republicanism and the subdivision of Spain.

It is not peace with France, which secures that feeble government; it is that peace, which, if it shall continue, decisively ruins Spain. Such a peace is not the peace which the remnant of Christianity celebrates at this holy season. In it there is no glory to God on high, and not the least tincture of goodwill to man. What things we have lived to see! The King of Spain in a group of Moors, Jews, and renegadoes, and the clergy taxed to pay for his conversion! The catholic king in the strict embraces of the most unchristian republic! I hope we shall never see his apostolic majesty, his faithful majesty, and the king, defender of the faith, added to that unhallowed and impious fraternity.

The noble author has glimpses of the consequences of peace as well as I. He feels for the colonies of Great Britain, one of the principal resources of our commerce and our naval power, if piratical France shall be established, as he knows she must be, in the West

Indies, if we sue for peace on such terms as they may condescend to grant us. He feels that their very colonial system for the interior is not compatible with the existence of our colonies. I tell him, and doubt not I shall be able to demonstrate, that, being what she is, if she possesses a rock there, we cannot be safe. Has this author had in his view the transactions between the regicide republic and the yet nominally subsisting monarchy of Spain?

I bring this matter under your lordship's consideration that you may have a more complete view than this author chooses to give of the *true France* you have to deal with, as to its nature, and to its force and its disposition. Mark it, my lord, France, in giving her law to Spain, stipulated for none of her indemnities in Europe, no enlargement whatever of her frontier. Whilst we are looking for indemnities from France, betraying our own safety in a sacrifice of the independence of Europe, France secures hers by the most important acquisition of territory ever made in the West Indies, since their first settlement. She appears (it is only in appearance) to give up the frontier of Spain, and she is compensated, not in appearance, but in reality, by a territory that makes a dreadful frontier to the colonies of Great Britain.

It is sufficiently alarming that she is to have the possession of this great island. But all the Spanish colonies virtually are hers. Is there so puny a whipster in the *petty form* of the school of politics, who can be at a loss for the fate of the British colonies, when he combines the French and Spanish consolidation with the known critical and dubious dispositions of the United States of America, as they are at present, but which, when a peace is made, when the basis of a regicide ascendancy in Spain is laid, will no longer be so good, as dubious and critical? But I go a great deal further; and on much consideration of the condition and circumstances of the West Indies, and of the genius of this new republic, as it has operated, and is likely to operate on them, I say that, if a single rock

in the West Indies is in the hands of this *transatlantic Morocco*, we have not an hour's safety there.

The remarker, though he slips from the main consideration, seems aware that this arrangement, standing as it does in the West Indies, leaves us at the mercy of the new coalition, or rather at the mercy of the sole guiding part of it. He does not, indeed, adopt a supposition, such as I make, who am confident, that anything, which can give them a single good port, and opportune piratical station there, would lead to our ruin; the author proceeds upon an idea that the regicides may be an existing and considerable territorial power in the West Indies, and, of course, her piratical system more dangerous and as real; however, for that desperate case he has an easy remedy; but surely, in his whole shop, there is nothing so extraordinary. It is that we three, France, Spain and England (there are no other of any moment), should adopt some '*analogy* in the interior systems of government in the several islands, which we may respectively retain after the closing of the war.'—This plainly can be done only by a convention between the parties, and I believe it would be the first war ever made to terminate in an analogy of the interior government of any country, or any parts of such countries. Such a partnership in domestic government is, I think, carrying fraternity as far as it will go.

It will be an affront to your sagacity to pursue this matter into all its details; suffice it to say that if this convention for analogous domestic government is made, it immediately gives a right for the residence of a consul (in all likelihood some negro, or man of colour) in every one of your islands; a regicide ambassador in London will be at all your meetings of West India merchants and planters, and, in effect, in all our colonial councils. Not one order of council can hereafter be made, or any one act of parliament relative to the West India colonies even be agitated, which will not always afford reasons for protests, and perpetual interference; the regicide republic will

become an integral part of the colonial legislature; and, so far as the colonies are concerned, of the British too. But it will be still worse; as all our domestic affairs are interlaced more or less intimately with our external, this intermeddling must everywhere insinuate itself into all other interior transactions, and produce a co-partnership in our domestic concerns of every description.

Such are the plain inevitable consequences of this arrangement of a system of analogous interior government. On the other hand, without it, the author assures us, and in this I heartily agree with him, 'that the correspondence and communications between the neighbouring colonies will be great; that the disagreements will be incessant; and that causes even of national quarrels will arise *from day to day*.' Most true. But, for the reasons I have given, the case, if possible, will be worse by the proposed remedy, by the triple fraternal interior analogy;—an analogy itself most fruitful, and more foodful, than the old Ephesian statue with the three tier of breasts. Your lordship must also observe how infinitely this business must be complicated by our interference in the slow-paced Saturnian movements of Spain, and the rapid parabolic flights of France. But such is the disease, such is the cure, such is, and must be, the effect of regicide vicinity.

But what astonishes me is, that the negotiator, who has certainly an exercised understanding, did not see that every person, habituated to such meditations, must necessarily pursue the train of thought further than he has carried it; and must ask himself whether what he states so truly of the necessity of our arranging an analogous interior government, in consequence of the vicinity of our possessions in the West Indies, does not as extensively apply, and much more forcibly, to the circumstance of our much nearer vicinity with the parent and author of this mischief. I defy even his acuteness and ingenuity to show me any one point, in which the cases differ, except that it is plainly more

necessary in Europe than in America. Indeed, the further we trace the details of the proposed peace, the more your lordship will be satisfied that I have not been guilty of any abuse of terms, when I use indiscriminately (as I always do in speaking of arrangements with regicide) the words peace and fraternity. An analogy between our interior governments must be the consequence. The noble negotiator sees it as well as I do. I deprecate this Jacobin interior analogy. But hereafter, perhaps, I may say a good deal more upon this part of the subject.

The noble lord insists on very little more than on the excellence of their constitution, the hope of their dwindling into little republics, and this close copartnership in government. I hear of others, indeed, that offer, by other arguments, to reconcile us to this peace and fraternity; the regicides, they say, have renounced the creed of the rights of man, and declared equality a chimera. This is still more strange than all the rest. They have apostatized from their apostasy. They are renegadoes from that impious faith, for which they subverted the ancient government, murdered their king, and imprisoned, butchered, confiscated, and banished their fellow-subjects; and to which they forced every man to swear at the peril of his life. And now, to reconcile themselves to the world, they declare this creed, bought by so much blood, to be an imposture and a chimera. I have no doubt that they always thought it to be so, when they were destroying everything at home and abroad for its establishment. It is no strange thing to those, who look into the nature of corrupted man, to find a violent persecutor a perfect unbeliever of his own creed. But this is the very first time that any man or set of men were hardy enough to attempt to lay the ground of confidence in them, by an acknowledgement of their own falsehood, fraud, hypocrisy, treachery, heterodox doctrine, persecution, and cruelty. Everything we hear from them is new, and, to use a phrase of their own, *revolutionary*; everything supposes a total revolu-

tion in all the principles of reason, prudence, and moral feeling.

If possible, this their recantation of the chief parts in the canon of the rights of man is more infamous, and causes greater horror, than their originally promulgating, and forcing down the throats of mankind that symbol of all evil. It is raking too much into the dirt and ordure of human nature to say more of it.

I hear it said, too, that they have lately declared in favour of property. This is exactly of the same sort with the former. What need had they to make this declaration, if they did not know that by their doctrines and practices they had totally subverted all property? What government of Europe, either in its origin or its continuance, has thought it necessary to declare itself in favour of property? The more recent ones were formed for its protection against former violations: the old considered the inviolability of property and their own existence as one and the same thing; and that a proclamation for its safety would be sounding an alarm on its danger. But the regicide banditti knew that this was not the first time they have been obliged to give such assurances, and had as often falsified them. They knew that, after butchering hundreds of men, women, and children, for no other cause than to lay hold on their property, such a declaration might have a chance of encouraging other nations to run the risk of establishing a commercial house amongst them. It is notorious that these very Jacobins, upon an alarm of the shopkeepers of Paris, made this declaration in favour of property. These brave fellows received the apprehensions expressed on that head with indignation; and said that property could be in no danger, because all the world knew it was under the protection of the *sans-culottes*. At what period did they not give this assurance? Did they not give it when they fabricated their first constitution? Did they not then solemnly declare it one of the rights of a citizen (a right, of course, only declared, and not then fabricated) to depart from his country,

and choose another *domicilium*, without detriment to his property? Did they not declare that no property should be confiscated from the children for the crime of the parent? Can they now declare more fully their respect for property, than they did at that time? And yet was there ever known such horrid violences and confiscations, as instantly followed under the very persons now in power, many of them leading members of that assembly, and all of them violators of that engagement, which was the very basis of their republic, —confiscations, in which hundreds of men, women, and children, not guilty of one act of duty in resisting their usurpation, were involved? This keeping of their old is, then, to give us a confidence in their new engagements. But examine the matter, and you will see that the prevaricating sons of violence give no relief at all, where at all it can be wanted. They renew their old fraudulent declaration against confiscations, and then they expressly exclude all adherents to their ancient lawful government from any benefit of it; that is to say, they promise that they will secure all their brother plunderers in their share of the common plunder. The fear of being robbed by every new succession of robbers, who do not keep even the faith of that kind of society, absolutely required that they should give security to the dividends of spoil, else they could not exist a moment. But it was necessary, in giving security to robbers, that honest men should be deprived of all hope of restitution; and thus their interests were made utterly and eternally incompatible. So that it appears that this boasted security of property is nothing more than a seal put upon its destruction; this ceasing of confiscation is to secure the confiscators against the innocent proprietors. That very thing, which is held out to you as your cure, is that which makes your malady, and renders it, if once it happens, utterly incurable. You, my lord, who possess a considerable, though not an invidious, estate, may be well assured that, if by being engaged, as you assuredly would be, in the defence of your religion, your king,

your order, your laws, and liberties, that estate should be put under confiscation, the property would be secured, but in the same manner, at your expense.

But after all, for what purpose are we told of this reformation in their principles, and what is the policy of all this softening in ours, which is to be produced by their example? It is not to soften us to suffering innocence and virtue, but to mollify us to the crimes and to the society of robbers and ruffians. But I trust that our countrymen will not be softened to that kind of crimes and criminals; for, if we should, our hearts will be hardened to everything which has a claim on our benevolence. A kind Providence has placed in our breasts a hatred of the unjust and cruel; in order that we may preserve ourselves from cruelty and injustice. They who bear cruelty are accomplices to it. The pretended gentleness which excludes that charitable rancour, produces an indifference, which is half an approbation. They never will love where they ought to love, who do not hate where they ought to hate.

There is another piece of policy, not more laudable than this, in reading these moral lectures, which lessens our hatred to criminals, and our pity to sufferers, by insinuating that it has been owing to their fault or folly that the latter have become the prey of the former. By flattering us that we are not subject to the same vices and follies, it induces a confidence that we shall not suffer the same evils by a contact with the infamous gang of robbers, who have thus robbed and butchered our neighbours before our faces. We must not be flattered to our ruin. Our vices are the same as theirs, neither more nor less. If any faults we had, which wanted this French example to call us to a '*softening* of character, and a review of our social relations and duties,' there is yet no sign that we have commenced our reformation. We seem, by the best accounts I have from the world, to go on just as formerly, 'some to undo, and some to be undone.' There is no change at all: and if we are not bettered by the sufferings of

war, this peace, which, for reasons to himself best known, the author fixes as the period of our reformation, must have something very extraordinary in it; because hitherto ease, opulence, and their concomitant pleasure, have never greatly disposed mankind to that serious reflection and review, which the author supposes to be the result of the approaching peace with vice and crime. I believe he forms a right estimate of the nature of this peace; and that it will want many of those circumstances which formerly characterized that state of things.

If I am right in my ideas of this new republic, the different states of peace and war will make no difference in her pursuits. It is not an enemy of accident that we have to deal with. Enmity to us, and to all civilized nations, is wrought into the very stamina of its constitution. It was made to pursue the purposes of that fundamental enmity. The design will go on regularly in every position, and in every relation. Their hostility is to break us to their dominion: their amity is to debauch us to their principles. In the former, we are to contend with their force; in the latter, with their intrigues. But we stand in a very different posture of defence in the two situations. In war, so long as government is supported, we fight with the whole united force of the kingdom. When under the name of peace the war of intrigue begins, we do not contend against our enemies with the whole force of the kingdom. No—we shall have to fight (if it should be a fight at all, and not an ignominious surrender of everything which has made our country venerable in our eyes and dear to our hearts), we shall have to fight with but a portion of our strength against the whole of theirs. Gentlemen who not long since thought with us, but who now recommend a Jacobin peace, were at that time sufficiently aware of the existence of a dangerous Jacobin faction within this kingdom. A while ago, they seemed to be tremblingly alive to the number of those who composed it, to their dark subtlety, to their fierce audacity, to their admiration of everything

that passes in France, to their eager desire of a close communication with the mother faction there. At this moment, when the question is upon the opening of that communication, not a word of our English Jacobins. That faction is put out of sight and out of thought. 'It vanished at the crowing of the cock.' Scarcely had the Gallic harbinger of peace and light begun to utter his lively notes, than all the cackling of us poor Tory geese to alarm the garrison of the Capitol was forgot[1]. There was enough of indemnity before. Now a complete act of oblivion is passed about the Jacobins of England, though one would naturally imagine it would make a principal object in all fair deliberation upon the merits of a project of amity with the Jacobins of France. But however others may choose to forget the faction, the faction does not choose to forget itself, nor, however gentlemen may choose to flatter themselves, it does not forget them.

Never, in any civil contest, has a part been taken with more of the warmth, or carried on with more of the arts, of a party. The Jacobins are worse than lost to their country. Their hearts are abroad. Their sympathy with the regicides of France is complete. Just as in a civil contest they exult in all their victories; they are dejected and mortified in all their defeats. Nothing that the regicides can do (and they have laboured hard for the purpose), can alienate them from their cause. You and I, my dear lord, have often observed on the spirit of their conduct. When the Jacobins of France, by their studied, deliberated, catalogued files of murders with the poniard, the sabre, and the tribunal, have shocked whatever remained of human sensibility in our breasts, then it was they distinguished the resources of party policy. They did not venture directly to confront the public sentiment; for a very short time they seemed to partake of it. They began with a reluctant and sorrowful confession: they deplored the stains which tarnished the lustre of a good

[1] . . Hic auratis volitans argenteus anser
Porticibus GALLOS in limine adesse canebat.

cause. After keeping a decent time of retirement, in a few days crept out an apology for the excesses of men cruelly irritated by the attacks of unjust power. Grown bolder, as the first feelings of mankind decayed and the colour of these horrors began to fade upon the imagination, they proceeded from apology to defence. They urged, but still deplored, the absolute necessity of such a proceeding. Then they made a bolder stride, and marched from defence to recrimination. They attempted to assassinate the memory of those whose bodies their friends had massacred; and to consider their murder as a less formal act of justice. They endeavoured even to debauch our pity, and to suborn it in favour of cruelty. They wept over the lot of those who were driven by the crimes of aristocrats to republican vengeance. Every pause of their cruelty they considered as a return of their natural sentiments of benignity and justice. Then they had recourse to history; and found out all the recorded cruelties, that deform the annals of the world, in order that the massacres of the regicides might pass for a common event; and even that the most merciful of princes, who suffered by their hands, should bear the iniquity of all the tyrants, who have at any time infested the earth. In order to reconcile us the better to this republican tyranny, they confounded the bloodshed of war with the murders of peace; and they computed how much greater prodigality of blood was exhibited in battles and in the storm of cities, than in the frugal well-ordered massacres of the revolutionary tribunals of France.

As to foreign powers, so long as they were conjoined with Great Britain in this contest, so long they were treated as the most abandoned tyrants, and, indeed, the basest of the human race. The moment any of them quits the cause of this government, and of all governments, he is rehabilitated, his honour is restored, all attainders are purged. The friends of Jacobins are no longer despots; the betrayers of the common cause are no longer traitors.

That you may not doubt that they look on this war as a civil war, and the Jacobins of France as of their party, and that they look upon us, though locally their countrymen, in reality as enemies, they have never failed to run a parallel between our late civil war, and this war with the Jacobins of France. They justify their partiality to those Jacobins by the partiality which was shown by several here to the colonies; and they sanction their cry for peace with the regicides of France by some of our propositions for peace with the English in America.

This I do not mention as entering into the controversy, how far they are right or wrong in this parallel, but to show that they do make it, and that they do consider themselves as of a party with the Jacobins of France. You cannot forget their constant correspondence with the Jacobins, whilst it was in their power to carry it on. When the communication is again opened, the interrupted correspondences will commence. We cannot be blind to the advantage which such a party affords to regicide France in all her views; and, on the other hand, what an advantage regicide France holds out to the views of the republican party in England. Slightly as they have considered their subject, I think this can hardly have escaped the writers of political ephemerides for any month or year. They have told us much of the amendment of the regicides of France, and of their returning honour and generosity. Have they told anything of the reformation, and of the returning loyalty of the Jacobins of England? Have they told us of *their* gradual softening towards royalty; have they told us what measures *they* are taking 'for putting the crown in commission,' and what approximations of any kind *they* are making towards the old constitution of their country? Nothing of this. The silence of these writers is dreadfully expressive. They dare not touch the subject: but it is not annihilated by their silence, nor by our indifference. It is but too plain that our constitution cannot exist with such a communication. Our humanity, our

manners, our morals, our religion, cannot stand with such a communication: the constitution is made by those things, and for those things: without them it cannot exist; and without them it is no matter whether it exists or not.

It was an ingenious parliamentary Christmas play, by which, in both Houses, you anticipated the holidays; —it was a relaxation from your graver employment;— it was a pleasant discussion you had, which part of the family of the constitution was the elder branch?— whether one part did not exist prior to the others; and whether it might exist and flourish if 'the others were cast into the fire[1]'? In order to make this saturnalian amusement general in the family, you sent it down stairs, that judges and jurics might partake of the entertainment. The unfortunate antiquary and augur, who is the butt of all this sport, may suffer in the roystering horse-play and practical jokes of the servants' hall. But whatever may become of him, the discussion itself, and the timing it, put me in mind of what I have read (where I do not recollect), that the subtle nation of the Grecks were busily employed, in the church of Santa Sophia, in a dispute of mixed natural philosophy, metaphysics, and theology, whether the light on Mount Tabor was created or uncreated, and were ready to massacre the holders of the unfashionable opinion, at the very moment when the ferocious enemy of all philosophy and religion, Mahomet II, entered through a breach into the capital of the Christian world. I may possibly suffer much more than Mr. Reeves (I shall certainly give much more general offence) for breaking in upon this constitutional amusement concerning the created or uncreated nature of the two Houses of Parliament, and by calling their attention to a problem, which may entertain them less, but which concerns them a great deal more, that is, whether, with this Gallic Jacobin fraternity, which they

[1] See Debates in Parliament upon Motions, made in both Houses, for prosecuting Mr. Reeves for a Libel upon the Constitution, December, 1795.

are desired by some writers to court, all the parts of the government, about whose combustible or incombustible qualities they are contending, may 'not be cast into the fire' together. He is a strange visionary (but he is nothing worse), who fancies that any one part of our constitution, whatever right of primogeniture it may claim, or whatever astrologers may divine from its horoscope, can possibly survive the others. As they have lived, so they will die, together. I must do justice to the impartiality of the Jacobins. I have not observed amongst *them* the least predilection for any of those parts. If there has been any difference in their malice, I think they have shown a worse disposition to the House of Commons than to the crown. As to the House of Lords, they do not speculate at all about it; and for reasons that are too obvious to detail.

The question will be concerning the effect of this French fraternity on the whole mass. Have we anything to apprehend from Jacobin communication, or have we not? If we have not, is it by our experience before the war that we are to presume that, after the war, no dangerous communion can exist between those who are well affected to the new constitution of France, and ill affected to the old constitution here?

In conversation I have not yet found, nor heard of, any persons, except those who undertake to instruct the public, so unconscious of the actual state of things, or so little prescient of the future, who do not shudder all over, and feel a secret horror at the approach of this communication. I do not except from this observation those, who are willing, more than I find myself disposed, to submit to this fraternity. Never has it been mentioned in my hearing, or from what I can learn in my inquiry, without the suggestion of an Alien Bill or some other measures of the same nature, as a defence against its manifest mischief. Who does not see the utter insufficiency of such a remedy, if such a remedy could be at all adopted? We expel suspected foreigners from hence, and we suffer every Englishman to pass over into France, to be initiated in all the

infernal discipline of the place, to cabal, and to be corrupted by every means of cabal and of corruption; and then to return to England, charged with their worst dispositions and designs. In France he is out of the reach of your police; and when he returns to England, one such English emissary is worse than a legion of French, who are either tongue-tied, or whose speech betrays them. But the worst aliens are the ambassador and his train. These you cannot expel without a proof (always difficult) of direct practice against the state. A French ambassador, at the head of a French party, is an evil which we have never experienced. The mischief is by far more visible than the remedy. But, after all, every such measure as an Alien Bill is a measure of hostility, a preparation for it, or a cause of dispute that shall bring it on. In effect, it is fundamentally contrary to a relation of amity, whose essence is a perfectly free communication. Everything done to prevent it will provoke a foreign war. Everything, when we let it proceed, will produce domestic distraction. We shall be in a perpetual dilemma; but it is easy to see which side of the dilemma will be taken. The same temper which brings us to solicit a Jacobin peace, will induce us to temporize with all the evils of it. By degrees our minds will be made to our circumstances. The novelty of such things, which produces half the horror, and all the disgust, will be worn off. Our ruin will be disguised in profit, and the sale of a few wretched baubles will bribe a degenerate people to barter away the most precious jewel of their souls. Our constitution is not made for this kind of warfare. It provides greatly for our happiness, it furnishes few means for our defence. It is formed, in a great measure, upon the principle of jealousy of the crown; and as things stood, when it took that turn, with very great reason. I go further; it must keep alive some part of that fire of jealousy eternally and chastely burning, or it cannot be the British constitution. At various periods we have had tyranny in this country, more than enough. We have had rebellions

with more or less justification. Some of our kings have made adulterous connexions abroad and trucked away for foreign gold the interests and glory of their crown. But, before this time, our liberty has never been corrupted. I mean to say that it has never been debauched from its domestic relations. To this time it has been English liberty, and English liberty only. Our love of liberty and our love of our country were not distinct things. Liberty is now, it seems, put upon a larger and more liberal bottom. We are men, and as men, undoubtedly, nothing human is foreign to us. We cannot be too liberal in our general wishes for the happiness of our kind. But in all questions on the mode of procuring it for any particular community, we ought to be fearful of admitting those, who have no interest in it, or who have, perhaps, an interest against it, into the consultation. Above all, we cannot be too cautious in our communication with those who seek their happiness by other roads than those of humanity, morals, and religion, and whose liberty consists, and consists alone, in being free from those restraints which are imposed by the virtues upon the passions.

When we invite danger from a confidence in defensive measures, we ought, first of all, to be sure that it is a species of danger against which any defensive measures that can be adopted will be sufficient. Next, we ought to know that the spirit of our laws, or that our own dispositions, which are stronger than laws, are susceptible of all those defensive measures which the occasion may require. A third consideration is, whether these measures will not bring more odium than strength to government; and the last, whether the authority that makes them, in a general corruption of manners and principles, can ensure their execution? Let no one argue from the state of things, as he sees them at present, concerning what will be the means and capacities of government, when the time arrives, which shall call for remedies commensurate to enormous evils.

It is an obvious truth that no constitution can

defend itself; it must be defended by the wisdom and fortitude of men. These are what no constitution can give; they are the gifts of God; and He alone knows whether we shall possess such gifts at the time when we stand in need of them. Constitutions furnish the civil means of getting at the natural; it is all that in this case they can do. But our constitution has more impediments than helps. Its excellencies, when they come to be put to this sort of proof, may be found among its defects.

Nothing looks more awful and imposing than an ancient fortification. Its lofty embattled walls, its bold, projecting, rounded towers, that pierce the sky, strike the imagination and promise inexpugnable strength. But they are the very things that make its weakness. You may as well think of opposing one of these old fortresses to the mass of artillery brought by a French irruption into the field, as to think of resisting, by your old laws, and your old forms, the new destruction which the corps of Jacobin engineers of to-day prepare for all such forms and all such laws. Besides the debility and false principle of their construction to resist the present modes of attack, the fortress itself is in ruinous repair, and there is a practicable breach in every part of it.

Such is the work. But miserable works have been defended by the constancy of the garrison. Weather-beaten ships have been brought safe to port by the spirit and alertness of the crew. But it is here that we shall eminently fail. The day that, by their consent, the seat of regicide has its place among the thrones of Europe, there is no longer a motive for zeal in their favour; it will at best be cold, unimpassioned, dejected, melancholy duty. The glory will seem all on the other side. The friends of the crown will appear not as champions, but as victims; discountenanced, mortified, lowered, defeated, they will fall into listlessness and indifference. They will leave things to take their course; enjoy the present hour, and submit to the common fate.

Is it only an oppressive nightmare, with which we have been loaded? Is it then all a frightful dream, and are there no regicides in the world? Have we not heard of that prodigy of a ruffian, who would not suffer his benignant sovereign, with his hands tied behind him, and stripped for execution, to say one parting word to his deluded people;—of Santerre, who commanded the drums and trumpets to strike up to stifle his voice, and dragged him backward to the machine of murder? This nefarious villain (for a few days I may call him so) stands high in France, as in a republic of robbers and murderers he ought. What hinders this monster from being sent as ambassador to convey to his majesty the first compliments of his brethren, the regicide Directory? They have none that can represent them more properly. I anticipate the day of his arrival. He will make his public entry into London on one of the pale horses of his brewery. As he knows that we are pleased with the Paris taste for the orders of knighthood[1], he will fling a bloody sash across his shoulders with the order of the holy guillotine, surmounting the crown, appendant to the riband. Thus adorned he will proceed from Whitechapel to the further end of Pall-Mall, all the music of London playing the Marseillois Hymn before him, and escorted by a chosen detachment of the *légion de l'échafaud*. It were only to be wished that no ill-fated loyalist for the imprudence of his zeal may stand in the pillory at Charing-Cross, under the statue of King Charles I, at the time of this grand procession, lest some of the rotten eggs, which the Constitutional Society shall let fly at his indiscreet head, may hit the virtuous murderer of his king. They might soil the state dress which the ministers of so many crowned

[1] '*In the costume assumed by the members of the legislative body, we almost behold the revival of the extinguished insignia of knighthood,*' &c. &c. *See* A View of the relative State of Great Britain and France at the commencement of the year 1796.

heads have admired, and in which Sir Clement Cotterel is to introduce him at St. James's.

If Santerre cannot be spared from the constitutional butcheries at home, Tallien may supply his place, and in point of figure, with advantage. He has been habituated to commissions; and he is as well qualified as Santerre for this. Nero wished the Roman people had but one neck. The wish of the more exalted Tallien, when he sat in judgment, was that his sovereign had eighty-three heads, that he might send one to every one of the departments. Tallien will make an excellent figure at Guildhall at the next sheriffs' feast. He may open the ball with my Lady Mayoress. But this will be after he has retired from the public table, and gone into the private room for the enjoyment of more social and unreserved conversation with the ministers of state and the judges of the bench. There these ministers and magistrates will hear him entertain the worthy aldermen with an instructing and pleasing narrative of the manner in which he made the rich citizens of Bourdeaux squeak, and gently led them by the public credit of the guillotine to disgorge their anti-revolutionary pelf.

All this will be the display, and the town-talk, when our regicide is on a visit of ceremony. At home nothing will equal the pomp and splendour of the *hôtel de la république*. There another scene of gaudy grandeur will be opened. When his citizen excellency keeps the festival which every citizen is ordered to observe, for the glorious execution of Louis XVI, and renews his oath of detestation of kings, a grand ball, of course, will be given on the occasion. Then what a hurly-burly;—what a crowding;—what a glare of a thousand flambeaux in the square;—what a clamour of footmen contending at the door;—what a rattling of a thousand coaches of duchesses, countesses, and Lady Marys, choking the way, and overturning each other, in a struggle who should be first to pay her court to the *citoyenne*, the spouse of the twenty-first husband, he the husband of the thirty-first wife, and

to hail her in the rank of honourable matrons, before the four days' duration of marriage is expired!—Morals, as they were:—decorum, the great outguard of the sex, and the proud sentiment of honour, which makes virtue more respectable, where it is, and conceals human frailty, where virtue may not be, will be banished from this land of propriety, modesty, and reserve.

We had before an ambassador from the most Christian king. We shall have then one, perhaps two, as lately, from the most anti-christian republic. His chapel will be great and splendid; formed on the model of the Temple of Reason at Paris, while the famous ode of the infamous *Chenier* will be sung, and a prostitute of the street adored as a goddess. We shall then have a French ambassador without a suspicion of popery. One good it will have: it will go some way in quieting the minds of that synod of zealous Protestant lay elders, who govern Ireland on the pacific principles of polemic theology, and who now, from dread of the Pope, cannot take a cool bottle of claret, or enjoy an innocent parliamentary job, with any tolerable quiet.

So far as to the French communication here:—what will be the effect of our communication there? We know that our new brethren, whilst they everywhere shut up the churches, increased in Paris, at one time at least fourfold, the opera-houses, the play-houses, the public shows of all kinds; and, even in their state of indigence and distress, no expense was spared for their equipment and decoration. They were made an affair of state. There is no invention of deduction, never wholly wanting in that place, that has not been increased; brothels, gaming-houses, everything. And there is no doubt but, when they are settled in a triumphant peace, they will carry all these arts to their utmost perfection, and cover them with every species of imposing magnificence. They have all along avowed them as a part of their policy; and, whilst they corrupt young minds through pleasure, they form them to crimes. Every idea of corporal gratification

is carried to the highest excess, and wooed with all the elegance that belongs to the senses. All elegance of mind and manners is banished. A theatrical, bombastic, windy phraseology of heroic virtue, blended and mingled up with a worse dissoluteness, and joined to a murderous and savage ferocity, forms the tone and idiom of their language and their manners. Any one, who attends to all their own descriptions, narratives, and dissertations, will find in that whole place more of the air of a body of assassins, banditti, housebreakers, and outlawed smugglers, joined to that of a gang of strolling players, expelled from and exploded in orderly theatres, with their prostitutes in a brothel, at their debauches and bacchanals, than anything of the refined and perfected virtues, or the polished, mitigated vices of a great capital.

Is it for this benefit we open 'the usual relations of peace and amity'? Is it for this our youth of both sexes are to form themselves by travel? Is it for this that with expense and pains we form their lisping infant accents to the language of France? I shall be told that this abominable medley is made rather to revolt young and ingenuous minds. So it is in the description. So perhaps it may in reality to a chosen few. So it may be, when the magistrate, the law, and the church, frown on such manners, and the wretches to whom they belong; when they are chased from the eye of day, and the society of civil life, into night-cellars, and caves and woods. But when these men themselves are the magistrates, when all the consequence, weight, and authority of a great nation adopt them; when we see them conjoined with victory, glory, power, and dominion, and homage paid to them by every government, it is not possible that the downhill should not be slid into, recommended by everything which has opposed it. Let it be remembered that no young man can go to any part of Europe without taking this place of pestilential contagion in his way; and, whilst the less active part of the community will be debauched by this travel, whilst chil-

dren are poisoned at these schools, our trade will put the finishing hand to our ruin. No factory will be settled in France, that will not become a club of complete French Jacobins. The minds of young men of that description will receive a taint in their religion, their morals, and their politics, which they will in a short time communicate to the whole kingdom.

Whilst everything prepares the body to debauch, and the mind to crime, a regular church of avowed atheism, established by law, with a direct and sanguinary persecution of Christianity, is formed to prevent all amendment and remorse. Conscience is formally deposed from its dominion over the mind. What fills the measure of horror is that schools of atheism are set up at the public charge in every part of the country. That some English parents will be wicked enough to send their children to such schools, there is no doubt. Better this island should be sunk to the bottom of the sea, than that (so far as human infirmity admits) it should not be a country of religion and morals.

With all these causes of corruption, we may well judge what the general fashion of mind will be through both sexes and all conditions. Such spectacles, and such examples, will overbear all the laws that ever blackened the cumbrous volumes of our statutes. When royalty shall have disavowed itself; when it shall have relaxed all the principles of its own support; when it has rendered the system of regicide fashionable, and received it as triumphant, in the very persons who have consolidated that system by the perpetration of every crime; who have not only massacred the prince, but the very laws and magistrates, which were the support of royalty, and slaughtered, with an indiscriminate proscription, without regard to either sex or age, every person, that was suspected of an inclination to king, law, or magistracy,—I say, will any one dare to be loyal? Will any one presume, against both authority and opinion, to hold up this unfashionable, antiquated, exploded constitution?

The Jacobin faction in England must grow in strength and audacity; it will be supported by other intrigues, and supplied by other resources, than yet we have seen in action. Confounded at its growth, the government may fly to parliament for its support. But who will answer for the temper of a House of Commons elected under these circumstances? Who will answer for the courage of a House of Commons, to arm the crown with the extraordinary powers that it may demand? But the ministers will not venture to ask half of what they know they want. They will lose half of that half in the contest; and, when they have obtained their nothing, they will be driven, by the cries of faction, either to demolish the feeble works they have thrown up in a hurry, or in effect, to abandon them. As to the House of Lords, it is not worth mentioning. The peers ought naturally to be the pillars of the crown; but when their titles are rendered contemptible, and their property invidious, and a part of their weakness, and not of their strength, they will be found so many degraded and trembling individuals, who will seek by evasion to put off the evil day of their ruin. Both Houses will be in perpetual oscillation between abortive attempts at energy, and still more unsuccessful attempts at compromise. You will be impatient of your disease, and abhorrent of your remedy. A spirit of subterfuge, and a tone of apology, will enter into all your proceedings, whether of law or legislation. Your judges, who now sustain so masculine an authority, will appear more on their trial than the culprits they have before them. The awful frown of criminal justice will be smoothed into the silly smile of seduction. Judges will think to insinuate and soothe the accused into conviction and condemnation, and to wheedle to the gallows the most artful of all delinquents. But they will not be so wheedled. They will not submit even to the appearance of persons on their trial. Their claim to this exception will be admitted. The place, in which some of the greatest names, which ever distinguished the history of this

country, have stood, will appear beneath their dignity. The criminal will climb from the dock to the side-bar, and take his place and his tea with the counsel. From the bar of the counsel, by a natural progress, he will ascend to the bench, which long before had been virtually abandoned. They, who escape from justice, will not suffer a question upon reputation. They will take the crown of the causeway; they will be revered as martyrs; they will triumph as conquerors. Nobody will dare to censure that popular part of the tribunal, whose only restraint on mis-judgment is the censure of the public. They, who find fault with the decision, will be represented as enemies to the institution. Juries that convict for the crown will be loaded with obloquy. The juries who acquit will be held up as models of justice. If parliament orders a prosecution, and fails (as fail it will), it will be treated to its face as guilty of a conspiracy maliciously to prosecute. Its care in discovering a conspiracy against the state will be treated as a forged plot to destroy the liberty of the subject; every such discovery, instead of strengthening government, will weaken its reputation.

In this state things will be suffered to proceed, lest measures of vigour should precipitate a crisis. The timid will act thus from character; the wise from necessity. Our laws have done all that the old condition of things dictated to render our judges erect and independent; but they will naturally fail on the side upon which they had taken no precautions. The judicial magistrates will find themselves safe as against the crown, whose will is not their tenure; the power of executing their office will be held at the pleasure of those, who deal out fame or abuse as they think fit. They will begin rather to consult their own repose, and their own popularity, than the critical and perilous trust that is in their hands. They will speculate on consequences, when they see at court an ambassador whose robes are lined with a scarlet dyed in the blood of judges. It is no wonder, nor are they to blame, when they are to consider how they shall answer for

their conduct to the criminal of to-day turned into the magistrate of to-morrow.

The press—

The army—

When thus the helm of justice is abandoned, an universal abandonment of all other posts will succeed. Government will be, for a while, the sport of contending factions, who, whilst they fight with one another, will all strike at her. She will be buffeted and beat forward and backward by the conflict of those billows; until at length, tumbling from the Gallic coast, the victorious tenth wave shall ride, like the bore, over all the rest, and poop the shattered, weather-beaten, leaky, water-logged vessel, and sink her to the bottom of the abyss.

Among other miserable remedies, that have been found in the *materia medica* of the old college, a change of ministry will be proposed; and probably will take place. They, who go out, can never long with zeal and goodwill support government in the hands of those they hate. In a situation of fatal dependence on popularity, and without one aid from the little remaining power of the crown, it is not to be expected that they will take on them that odium, which more or less attaches upon every exertion of strong power. The ministers of popularity will lose all their credit at a stroke, if they pursue any of those means necessary to give life, vigour, and consistence to government. They will be considered as venal wretches, apostates, recreant to all their own principles, acts, and declarations. They cannot preserve their credit, but by betraying that authority of which they are the guardians.

To be sure no prognosticating symptoms of these things have as yet appeared: nothing even resembling their beginnings. May they never appear! May these prognostications of the author be justly laughed at and speedily forgotten. If nothing as yet to cause them has discovered itself, let us consider, in the author's excuse, that we have not yet seen a Jacobin legation in England. The natural, declared, sworn

ally of sedition has not yet fixed its head-quarters in London.

There never was a political contest, upon better or worse grounds, that by the heat of party-spirit may not ripen into civil confusion. If ever a party adverse to the crown should be in a condition here publicly to declare itself, and to divide, however unequally, the natural force of the kingdom, they are sure of an aid of fifty thousand men, at ten days'. warning, from the opposite coast of France. But against this infusion of a foreign force the crown has its guarantees, old and new. But I should be glad to hear something said of the assistance which loyal subjects in France have received from other powers, in support of that lawful government which secured their lawful property. I should be glad to know, if they are so disposed to a neighbourly, provident, and sympathetic attention to their public engagements, by what means they are to come at us. Is it from the powerful states of Holland we are to reclaim our guarantee ? Is it from the King of Prussia, and his steady good affections, and his powerful navy, that we are to look for the guarantee of our security ? Is it from the Netherlands, which the French may cover with the swarms of their citizen-soldiers in twenty-four hours, that we are to look for this assistance ? This is to suppose, too, that all these powers have no views offensive or necessities defensive of their own. They will cut out work for one another, and France will cut out work for them all.

That the Christian religion cannot exist in this country with such a fraternity, will not, I think, be disputed with me. On that religion, according to our mode, all our laws and institutions stand as upon their base. That scheme is supposed in every transaction of life ; and if that were done away, everything else, as in France, must be changed along with it. Thus, religion perishing, and with it this constitution, it is a matter of endless meditation what order of things would follow it. But what disorder would fill the space between the present and that which is to come

in the gross, is no matter of doubtful conjecture. It is a great evil that of a civil war. But in that state of things, a civil war, which would give to good men and a good cause some means of struggle, is a blessing of comparison that England will not enjoy. The moment the struggle begins, it ends. They talk of Mr. Hume's euthanasia of the British Constitution gently expiring without a groan in the paternal arms of a mere monarchy.—In a monarchy!—fine trifling indeed—there is no such euthanasia for the British Constitution—

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The manuscript copy of this Letter ends here.

END OF VOL. VI.

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